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Renewed By the Spirit

Sermons on Spiritual Discoveries

BY
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To My Wife
SYLVIA BLANCHARD KNUDSEN
And My Mother
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

MY publishers have invited me to prepare a volume of sermons "representative of the younger generation of present day ministers." It requires considerable hardihood to attempt a response to such an invitation. The younger ministers are probably even more variegated than were their predecessors. Among us are priests and prophets, institutionalists and individualists, conservatives and progressives, mystics and pragmatists, inter-denominationalists and sectarians, defenders of the *status quo* and whole-hearted contenders for the "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Nevertheless, contacts with younger ministers in international and inter-denominational conferences persuade me that Christianity is being renewed by a new spirit. The promise in Ezekiel is in a very plain fashion being fulfilled: "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you."

Open-mindedness is one of the marks of the new spirit. We are not producing a new generation of "fight to the finish" modernists and fundamentalists. There is a distinct tendency among the conservatives and liberals to regard each other's positions with tolerance and sympathetic understanding. Of especial interest in this connection are the summer conferences which have been conducted for six years at Columbiona-on-Lake George. Dr. Wilbert W. White, president of the New York

Biblical Seminary, has invited six groups each summer to discuss religious problems. Group members have been carefully selected, the deliberate purpose being to have every shade of Christian belief represented in the sessions. The spirit of bigotry and dogmatism has been marvelously absent. The predominating note has been the earnest desire on the part of the delegates to learn more of one another's point of view and to determine the common denominator of convictions among all denominations.

It may be that the new foes of Christianity, behaviourism and humanism, have helped to drive the various Christian parties together. But a more powerful force is a new baptism of the Christian spirit, which sees no compatibility between intolerance and Christlikeness.

Another factor in the cessation of hostilities between modernist and fundamentalist is a movement toward the center. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find a younger conservative who will insist, for instance, on inerrancy in Scripture. As one who has been nationally regarded as a fundamentalist said recently, "The theory of inerrancy would require inerrant writers, inerrant translators, and inerrant readers." There is a very definite reaction, also, from extreme modernism. Many liberals have been horrified to discover that the logical result of their own thinking is nothing less than atheism. There is a new interest in mysticism, a new conviction that God speaks to men in other ways than through the intellect. At the center toward which both of the theological parties are moving are the authority of religious experience, the Bible as a record of the most important spiritual discoveries of

the ages, Christianity as a way of life, and Christ as the supreme moral and spiritual revelation of God. It is not difficult to envisage a united Christendom through the eyes of the new clergyman. The spirit of Augustine is being renewed. "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity" was the admonition of the great fifth century saint. Standing on this premise, the new preaching is practically free from acrimonious doctrinal controversy.

While we may expect more peace between Christian factions in the years that are ahead, we may look also for renewed vigour in the Christian warfare upon entrenched social wrong. In the generation just behind us a very thin line of ministers formed a bare support for the wider interpretation of applied Christianity presented by such brave pioneers as Walter Rauschenbusch and Josiah Strong. To-day that thin line has become an army. It is true that there are still many vacancies in the ranks. Yet the representative minister in to-morrow's church will not be content with a Christianity which is concerned only with restricted areas such as the home, individual relationships, or the conventional "rules of the game" in business. The "rules of the game" will be examined for their moral soundness. The Christian must make an attempt to relate his religion to every avenue of his activity, or he will spend many an uncomfortable hour in church! While seeking to preserve a spiritual background in all his sermonizing, the new exponent of the gospel fights to preserve the reality and the vitality of his faith by insisting on its application to every phase of human life, political, industrial, international, and inter-racial as well as ecclesiastical.

I hope that the sermons in this book embody to some extent these trends in the new preaching. I have tried to be faithful to the title *Renewed by the Spirit,* choosing the sermons that are designed to help those who are suffering, striving, and wistfully searching for the way, the truth, and the life. My theme is that spiritual renewal will come to any one who will accept for himself the essence of first century Christianity,—teachableness, religious assurance through devotion to Christ, and the incomparable thrill of battling against human wrong that the kingdom of God may come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

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Several publishers and poets have been very kind in allowing me to include poems which have appeared elsewhere. I wish to express my gratitude to the *Forum, The Author's League of America,* and Miss Nada de Braganca for permission to print the poem *Prayer* by Miss Braganca, which appears in the sermon *The Great Confession.* To the *Outlook* and Hermann Hagedorn I am indebted for the use of the poem *The Boy in Armour* which appears in the sermon *The New Patriotism.* In the sermon *Trail Climbers* appears part of the poem *In Worship* by Rev. Jesse W. Bunch. I appreciate the kindness of the *Pacific Christian Advocate* and Rev. Jesse Bunch in allowing me the use of these lines. In *Explorers of the Spirit* is part of a poem by the Rev. J. S. Pennepacker, which appeared in the *Pacific*

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C. K.

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I

EXPLORERS OF THE SPIRIT

AMERICA'S distinctive asset in character building has always been the spirit of her pioneers. It seemed a few years ago that this asset faced imminent danger. The glamour and the glory of pioneering in new soils and of conquering the raw elements of untamed and untrailed regions were fast passing. The writer as a small boy went with his family, in 1909, to eastern Montana, where he saw towns rise over night on the plains, and where he saw "homesteaders" from the East laying siege to the last vestiges of American wilderness and causing it to teem with civilization and progress.

But the conquest of Montana prairies did not mark the end of explorations for the daring youth of the new generation. Our squadrons of the air are finding new trails in the sky; our scientists declare that we are only in the sunrise of the wonder age; our sociologists tell us that new conceptions of human relationships are about to emancipate the masses of men from age long physical, intellectual, and spiritual bondage.

Thoughtful Christians realize that the religion of Jesus Christ requires the spirit of the pioneer. Learning from the successful explorations of our Pilgrim ancestors, we see that, like the heroes of the faith who pass in review in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, they desired a "better country." They

too, " if they had been mindful of that country from which they went out " might have " had opportunity to return." Why did they not turn back to the comfort and safety of old England? Their eyes were set toward the future. They had within their souls the spirit of Christian adventure.

The history of man testifies to the eternal restlessness of his soul. Of all creation, man does not live by bread alone. Animals are satisfied with warmth and food. If they migrate into colder climates, they are satisfied with passive adaptation. Those that cannot stand the lower temperature die. The others grow blubber, heavy fur coats, and the capacities to eat great quantities of heat-producing food. But no man is satisfied with passive adaptation. He builds houses, knits sweaters, weaves garments, invents stoves. He adapts his environment to his body. Furthermore, he is not satisfied with physical comfort. An unseen voice calls him on to travel, to broader knowledge, to wider experiences. So man tames animals, and soon a vast system of transportation is under way. Later he invents steam engines, railroads, airplanes, and the world is brought to his feet.

Every part of man's faculties responds to the urge of progress. His ears are not only to hear sounds of danger or the call of his mate, as with animals. There is a hunger for melodies; so he builds harmonies that tell secrets to the soul. Music is not necessary to keep the body alive, but man brings coronation to Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven because they answer the demands for the higher qualities of life. Man's eyes are not only to guide his goings, as with the beasts of the field. There is a fine delicacy that asks for the beautiful; so man

paints a Sistine Madonna, a Matterhorn, a Sir Galahad. Man's mind is not only to outwit his rivals, as with the lower creatures. There is intellectual hunger that reaches out for the mysteries. So with Plato, and Socrates, and Kant, and Hegel, and Comte, and Haeckel, and James, and Bowne, he looks out beyond the stars, explores the border regions of thought and mystery, and answers the demand for an upward climb. Man's spirit is not satisfied with the commonplace. In every soul there is a quest for God; there is an irrepressible longing to share His fellowship; there is a God-planted knowledge that only in purity of character and consciousness of oneness with the Divine can the travail of the soul be satisfied.

We are explorers of the spirit! Let us learn from the Pilgrim fathers some of the qualifications of a successful explorer. How does the explorer become the discoverer? Three qualifications loom large.

The first essential is that of *purpose*. In the striking movements of world history there have always been leaders whose souls were heated to white-flamed intensity with indomitable purpose. A primary need of this day is for clear and definite objectives. Jesus gave us the goal, "Be ye therefore perfect." But in our age we have come to look smilingly at impractical idealism. Business men will ask: "What sense is there in idealism so high that you will never reach it?" They might be asked: "What sense is there in idealism so low that you can reach it by to-morrow evening at seven-thirty?" Progress would stop as soon as such an ideal was attained.

As the goal of the individual Christian must be perfection of motive and conduct, so the objective

of the church must be the realization of the kingdom of God. What can be more important in the present swirl of thought and collision of denominational policies than the clarification of the grand purpose of it all?

Shall we adopt the Hebrew conception of a political kingdom miraculously instituted and miraculously administered? The apocalyptic hope will require only a policy of standing by, of watchful waiting. Shall we acknowledge the individualistic conception of the kingdom, which declares that the purpose will be achieved when every individual is rescued from the pagan environment of "this world"? If so, withdraw our social service programs! Shall we take the institutional idea, which asserts that the kingdom will arrive when every one is enlisted in the church? If the church is the kingdom, underwrite the industrial policies of all our magnates who happen to be members! Or shall we take the more challenging and more worthy idea that the kingdom of God implies the Christianization of every department of man's activity? Wherever there are human interactions, there will be battlefields for those who are zealots for the kingdom, if we adopt this as the goal. Industry will be conducted on Christian standards; political affairs will be dominated with Christian idealism; international relationships will be the relationships of brother and brother; the will of God will be consulted by all organizations of men.

Because the Pilgrims had a great purpose, they made a brave beginning. But further success was dependent somewhat on *good judgment*. We can remember, however, when education or even the em-

ployment of ordinary good judgment instead of "dependence on the Spirit" was considered in some quarters a mountainous handicap to religious growth. We still believe that an education is not necessary to spirituality. Choice religious blessings have come to folk walking in the darkness of ignorance. But while education is not necessary to salvation, neither is ignorance. It is significant that Jesus took Deut. 6:5: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," and changed it to: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy *mind*." (Matt. 22:37)

In going through stormy seas we want a captain who has not only a good heart but a good head. In the uncharted sea of life we need not only the right feeling but the right knowledge. This is a complex world for which no simpleton's gospel is adequate. The simple gospel will stand the strain, however, in the hands of men who have learned to use their minds to God's glory. It is no accident that all the leaders of great religious movements have been products of the best educational systems of their day. Call the roll, and include Paul, Augustine, Huss, Wyclif, Calvin, Luther, Wesley! The point is that to accept the last named definition of the kingdom of God means a wrestle with economic, social, and political forces which are herculean in strength and very technical in make-up. We need strategy for the battle, and we need sorely to know the enemy's territory. Economics, sociology, and political science make good subjects for prospective leaders of religious movements. Philosophy of religion, theology, church history, psychology of re-

ligion, and Bible exegesis are taken for granted. Even more important than knowing the enemy's territory is to know our own!

By no means least is the necessary *spirit*. We have all seen intercollegiate football games in which the winners were outweighed and out-trained but had the preponderance of spirit. Be assured that after the Pilgrims had formulated their purpose and used their best judgment, it required mighty spirits to carry through the program. We may have the purpose and the judgment in our present-day life-and-death struggle with entrenched wrong, but something suggests that we need super-power. No doubt, our machinery, social and ecclesiastical, was never better. Pastors' studies have become offices, and the system is organized even down to the "sink pipe committee." But is the power registering? If not, why not?

From successful explorers we take another lesson. The leaders of the Pilgrims inspired many otherwise vacillating souls to action. The magnetism of leaders like Napoleon, Wesley, or John Knox often approaches the miraculous. Moulton in his *Certainty of God* points out that other religions have gods who forgive, who take revenge on their subjects, who stand aloof from human needs. But the distinctive note in Christianity is that our leader battled through the sternest and cruelest of human situations and came off the field victorious. Jesus had not only the purpose and the judgment, but the spirit that comes to those who are sure of their God and their cause. Just as contact with Napoleon, Wesley, or Knox led others to courageous endeavour, so the contact of our spirits with the spirit

of Christ will kindle fires of religious passion in our souls.

The prayer of our hearts is found in the lines of J. S. Pennepacker:

> *"To Thee we turn again to-day*
> *From sordid greed and love grown cold;*
> *To Thee with hungry hearts, we pray;*
> *O turn our spirits' dross to gold.*
> *Take us once more, with Thee away,*
> *To quiet places, lone and still;*
> *Teach us, again, with Thee to stay,*
> *That we may learn our Father's will."*

If we will cultivate real companionship with God through the leadership of our Captain, the Man of Galilee, we may yet fall heir to that depth of spirit, which, with purpose and judgment, turns explorers of the spirit into discoverers!

II

SUFFERINGS, CALAMITIES, AND GOD

OF all the perplexing questions which arrest the attention of the thinking Christian, the most persistent is that of sufferings, calamities, and God. The question emerges whenever a disaster due to natural causes strikes terror into the hearts of men. How can a good God allow the tragedy of a hurricane, depriving thousands of families of their homes, throwing thousands more into poverty, and sending hundreds to premature and fearful deaths? Why does God terrorize the world with earthquakes, wrecking cities, destroying churches, breaking up homes? Why does God permit drought to bankrupt our western farmers and break their hopes and their hearts? How can a Christlike God strike men by lightning, drown them by flood, freeze them in blizzards, poison them with disease? These are problems that come from cosmic calamities, stirring us to the depths in our thought of the heavenly Father.

Then there are the brutalities in nature to threaten our confidence in the love of God. We are told that the sharks and the whales of the sea depend upon living fish for their food; the jungle is always the scene of gaping breath, oozing blood, and hideous torture. The merciless law of the survival of the fittest seems unchallenged as thousands

of species of living creatures succumb to the pain and the penalty of existence at the hands of their bloodthirsty and remorseless enemies.

Not only the ruthless savagery of the jungle, but the fierce barbarism of mankind, which brings about untold misery among countless millions, comes into our thinking to call for a reassessment of our faith. As we think of the outrages committed by corporations on the lives of men, women, and children,—all for profit; as we think of the pagan spectacle of employers accumulating wealth that no man can compute, while their own employes starve their bodies and souls in a hopeless battle with poverty; as we think of our international fratricide in which millions are maimed and massacred in the interests of commercial advantage; as we think of the centuries of slavery which is even now with us in divers forms; as we think of the multitudes who suffer from the excessive greed of their fellow men, we are compelled to come to grips with the thought, " How can God create man who will bring such unutterable anguish into the lives of his brothers? "

We should not be so disquieted if the revolting agonies of the universe were all heaped upon the sinful and the guilty. But it is the maldistribution of this pain that makes us think. The wicked often prosper while their righteous neighbours languish in poverty; the selfish are frequently forced to the forefront of wealth and comfort and public esteem, while the altruistic and the unselfish are lost in oblivion. Little children are torn with diseases that are more than their tender frames can possibly resist and are hurried off to an untimely death. Mothers who have been extremely selfish are rewarded with noble sons, and mothers who have with wonderful patience

and saintly fortitude poured out their lifeblood for their sons and daughters are rewarded with ingratitude and disgrace.

These are some of the pictures of sufferings and calamities that pursued John Stuart Mill, leading him to say, "Nearly all the things that men are hanged and imprisoned for doing to one another are nature's every-day performance." The problem even perplexed Epicurus; for he observed far back in the dawn of history that "God is either powerless to prevent evil or malevolent in His desire that it shall not be abolished." James Russell Lowell tells us that in Belgium he once saw a picture of an angel staying the hand of God lest He make another world like this!

The mystery that we have outlined is not a twentieth-century question. It has bewildered mankind through all ages of thought. It is interesting to study the Bible and see how in every period of sacred history men have tried to fathom the depths of this subject and have depended on one theory or another to explain the presence of pain in the world.

In Genesis we find the idea that all suffering is the result of sin. The tyranny of the husband and the pains of childbirth are due to Eve's sin in the garden; man's burdensome labour is due to Adam's first departure from God's laws. In Deuteronomy, the twenty-eighth chapter, it is explained that righteousness will be followed by good crops, military victory, and economic success, while sin will result in poor crops, military defeat, and economic failure. In the thirty-seventh Psalm we read, "Evildoers shall be cut off, but those that wait for Jehovah, they shall inherit the land," affirming again the belief that

there is a direct relationship between moral conduct and worldly success.

Isaiah revolted against the traditional thought and refused to believe, for instance, that the Jews were exiled on account of their sin. He thought that they were exiled in order that they might be a light unto the Gentiles; in order that they might be forced to let their religious light shine in a foreign land. He was the first to conceive of vicarious suffering, and prophesied the time when the Saviour of men would come as a suffering Lord—suffering not for His sins but for the sins of the world, and by His very agonies of body and soul leading men to God.

Jeremiah wondered why he was subject to so many hardships when he had been loyal to God's call to service, but concluded that his companionship with God was worth all the suffering that it involved. Job answered his friends, who tried to convince him that his awful misery was due to his own misdoing, by his final conclusion that God's wisdom and might and glory are so great that His ways with men need not be questioned. He ended his search for a solution with a wonderful trust, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Outside the Bible there have also been earnest attempts to understand our problem. We think first of the pessimists like Schopenhauer and Leopardi. They observed that there was more suffering than happiness in the world, and therefore concluded that this was a hopeless life. Their pessimism was due to the fact that they thought of pleasure and comfort as the goal of existence. We would admit that if painlessness and ease are the objectives of the universe, this life is a failure. But, thank God,

not many of us try to live on philosophy as effeminate and bloodless as that.

Then we have had the Stoics, who relied on their inner strength to solve the problem. Their policy was to ignore the pains and discomforts of life and go forward to their appointed goals. But this method was hardly more than an evasion of the problem. We are not here to avoid our mystery but to probe it and find something that will satisfy our souls.

Furthermore, we have had our meliorists. They were most prominent during the war and were much more helpful than the pessimists or the Stoics. Human suffering, they thought, is against the will of God. It is His purpose to exterminate the evil from the earth. It is man's duty to respond to the high call of sympathy, loyalty, and humanitarianism, and to sacrifice himself for the common good. The only difficulty with the meliorists is that they are following a helpless God. He is a young God with great plans ahead; He is against the forces that bring trouble to man, but aims to defeat them ultimately. This is a brave philosophy which calls out man's finest character, but the defeat of all sorrow seems so remote that meliorism fails to satisfy us or to bring us very much relief.

What, then, is our Christian approach to the problem of human distress? In the first place, *the end of life is not a painless world but a race of moral and spiritual giants!* Jesus never bade men follow Him to a haven of rest. One day a young man in the crowd announced his willingness to follow Jesus. The Master saw that he did not measure his words or count the cost, and said, "Foxes have holes; the

birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." The symbol of Christianity is not a pillow of ease but a rough-hewn cross. If we remember that the apparent object of this universe is not to furnish a health resort for weary pilgrims, but to develop spiritual personalities worthy to live with God, the problem of human distress takes on a different angle.

We are all sure that there can be no character without human freedom and without responsibility. If men were so created that they could not sin and could not bring affliction to their fellow beings, there would be no such thing as character. Spiritual strength comes from voluntarily choosing the right and spurning the wrong. If we *had* to observe the Ten Commandments; if we *had* to worship God; if we were *compelled* by nature to be kind and forbearing and patient; if it were *impossible* to do wrong, we should have about as much personality as the privates in the parade of the wooden soldiers. The price that God must pay for human freedom and character is the possibility of sin with all its heart-breaking consequences.

This, in part at least, takes care of our question as to the calamities due to man's sin,—calamities such as war, poverty, slavery, tyranny, many kinds of disease, and indescribable mental grief. This is Christianity's first contribution to the problem: man-made suffering is a necessary result of man's freedom to choose between right and wrong, and this freedom is indispensable to Christian character.

Our second contribution to the problem of suffering is the thought that *a sure reward for right living and a certain punishment for sin would destroy*

the possibility of strong and noble character. Job was wondering why adversity came to him with such intensity while his wicked neighbour prospered. He was asked the penetrating question, "Dost thou serve God for wages?" A farmer once asked me why the hail-storm hit his wheat crop while he worshipped at church, while his neighbour's field was untouched, though he was ungodly. He was like many other people who think they ought to have a pay-check every Saturday night for all the good they have done during the week.

If the world were so ordered that the wicked apparently suffered and the righteous enjoyed comfort, every one would try to be righteous for selfish reasons, which would be a contradiction of terms. Moral splendour consists of a willingness to do the right thing at a loss. This is why we do not think very highly of the maxim "Honesty is the best policy." We do not rate honesty very high if it is accepted as a business policy. The honesty we prize as a godly virtue is the honesty that stands for faultless methods for the sake of righteousness and that will not surrender though the heavens fall. The typical Christian hero is not he who has performed valiant deeds of righteousness because it was the best policy. It is he who has followed Christ to the cross.

Jesus did not promise prosperity to His disciples. He said, "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." See the glory in Stephen's face as he is being stoned to death and looks up to heaven, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." See Paul saying, "I have fought the good fight, . . . I have

kept the faith," and then bending his neck to the executioner's stroke. See St. Francis of Assisi give away his inherited wealth to charity, live a simple life of helpfulness and love for his fellow men, and suffer for the needy of his age. Then let us be ashamed of ourselves if we expect material reward for our small deeds of righteousness. Let us pray for forgiveness if we are ever guilty of moral compromise or spiritual laxity simply for fear of the inconveniences that may come to us if we stand for the right and for God. This is the second great contribution of our faith: character is impossible if goodness guarantees a reward of comfort or prosperity.

Our third contribution to the problem of evil is that *suffering is necessary for spiritual insights.* No man can comfort those who mourn unless he himself has suffered the loss of a loved one; no man can sympathize with the sick unless he too has fought with disease on a bed of pain; no one can truly be a disciple of Christ unless he has paid a price for his discipleship. Suffering is a window through which man sees the glory of God and is satisfied.

Let us look for a moment at some of the souls that have brightened heaven and earth with their discoveries of God and His world. Let us think with Dr. Fosdick of Milton, who gave us the priceless *Paradise Lost,* but who wrote every word of it while a prisoner of blindness; let us be grateful for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, but remember that he composed this classic under the frightful handicap of deafness; let us thank Francis Parkman for his famous stories of heroism and Christian example, but let us recall that Parkman was afflicted with a

serious eye trouble when he wrote them and had to hold his pen in line by the use of parallel wires strung across the pages of his manuscripts; let us sing the beatific hymns of Fanny Crosby, but let us know that these great poems of heavenly bliss were composed in total blindness; let us read with appreciation John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress,* but let us also see that he discovered the vital truths hidden there while he was languishing in a cruel dungeon.

Consider the testimony in a letter from a personal friend: " From the moment that I stood on the blizzard swept street in South Hamilton with the doctor's words ringing in my aching head that Annie would not live through the night,—feeling alone, lost, licked—a mere speck of dust in the cold, mechanical, soulless universe,—there came to me a feeling of support, and from somewhere I heard—not on the ear but in my conscious self—that text that I had despised, ' Underneath are the everlasting arms.' "

When we measure our eternal debt to the saints of earth who have forged our richest spiritual treasures out of their own sufferings, we can imagine what an inane and barren world this would be without the spiritual illumination that comes from bearing a cross. Without disasters and calamities our sympathy and our altruism and our passion for service would die of uselessness. When I think of the unprecedented spirit of unselfishness and the high order of idealism which the war called out of American youth, I can sometimes see traces of good in even such a tragedy as war. When I think of a nation's people summoned from an orgy of pleasure-seeking and profit-making to bring relief to their

stricken brethren, I can see good even in such an appalling disaster as the Florida hurricane. The tragedy was not an intentional visitation of God for the sins of America. It was an accident inevitable because of the temporary nature of the earth's structure.

God has made a world designed for limited habitation. Scientists tell us that some day we shall lose the sun's heat and that all life will disappear. God evidently does not intend this earth to be calamity-proof, but He does give us a faith that can stand any shock which may come. He does make it possible for us to use for spiritual uplift the disasters that descend upon us. They seem to be the only powers capable of turning some men's thoughts toward God. They call men to their noblest levels of thought and action, and remind us, in the face of death and destruction, that a life built on the shifting sands of materialism and worldliness is doomed to collapse.

Christianity's final and greatest contribution to the problem of suffering is a faith that will not shrink though pressed by every foe. Jesus' parable of the house built on a rock gives us a vivid picture of His thought on our question. The winds of adversity and calamity blow on our houses whether they are built on the sand or on the solid rock. The difference is that the house which stands on a rock falls not; but the house built on sand falls, and great is the fall thereof.

Two mothers are stricken with poignant grief because God has taken their beloved little ones to the other world. One mother grows gray with sorrow and loses what faith she had in God or right. The

other mother says, " My darling baby is in heaven; God is nearer to me now, for my boy is with Him in His heavenly home."

Every man, woman, and child has a date with disaster which must be kept. We cannot be Christ's disciples without paying a tangible price for our convictions. There is a cross for every one; there is a cross for me! The question is not, why do men suffer? But, are we so close to God, so consecrated to our Lord, that, as with the disciples of old, our sufferings will only add to the luster of discipleship? Can we say with Forrest Ward Werts, " Pain and suffering and disappointment are but the rungs in the ladder to the life abundant " ? Shall we go forth like Paul and Silas from their prison cells, rejoicing that we have been counted worthy to suffer in His name? Can we see through the window of our suffering the glory of Christ, whose cross is our salvation?

III

THE KINGDOM WITHIN YOU

WHEN the historian writes his account of the period in which we live, what title will he give his chapter? He will very likely call our present age "the age of things." He will distinguish us by our terrific stampede for quantity production, our worship of speed, our hot pursuit after dollars. He may quote Emerson, who said, "Things are in the saddle, and ride mankind." He will not forget our suggestion of international idealism, our capacity for emotional impulses. He will do us justice and give us credit for appreciation of the artistic and literary achievements of our ancestors; but if he is frank, he will probably say that we became famous for our unquenchable interest in practical acquisitions, our unceasing search for greater dimensions and greater totals of things that we can see and hear and feel.

Murdock, in writing his informing volume on *Increase Mather,* tells how Mrs. Mather on her death-bed said to her little son, Increase, "Child, if God make thee a good Christian and a good scholar, thou hast all that ever thy mother asked of thee." How many mothers to-day would say the same thing? Should we not be more likely to hear, "If you can beat your father's record in collecting the cash, we shall all be proud of you"?

We are contending that the supreme obstacle to

religion to-day is this false estimate of the importance of things, of size, of quantity, of statistical results. We are almost blood brothers of the Pharisees, who looked for black-and-white materialistic evidences of the coming of the kingdom, and who asked Jesus when it was all going to happen. His reply was, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, 'Lo here!' or 'Lo there!', for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." We have no evidence that they understood His great offensive against materialism in religion. Neither did they understand Paul when he said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity . . . I am nothing." He led his Corinthian churchmen behind the scenes of charitable giving to the real heart of the giver, analyzing his motives and searching the heart before he rendered tribute. This same accentuation of the centrality of the heart life is given consummate expression in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus calls before the bar of judgment the man who in his heart is an adulterer or a murderer, and places him on the same level with the men who actually accomplish their foul purposes.

Likewise, Jesus would put on a pedestal the widow who places her mite in the treasury. Her contribution is as acceptable as a thousand dollars from a millionaire because it is prompted by equally pure motives and represents even more sacrifice. Eucken saw the heart of Christianity when he wrote, "The main thing in Christianity is the creation of a purely inward world formed out of the relationship of spirit to spirit and of personality to personality."

There are at least three things that we need to

remember regarding the secret of the kingdom within you. First, man is free to control his own destiny. This may seem commonplace, but there are plenty of so-called psychologists to-day who insist that man is nothing but a bundle of instincts, an arena where the strongest impulses meet in deadly combat, and that the most powerful instinct is sure to win.

We like the words of James Martineau on this subject: "It is unintelligible that man, a mere piece of mysterious machinery, should take interest in the general condition of his environment, assume responsibility for it, and feel himself driven by his conscience to battle against evils." The plainest experiences teach us that our fiercest passions for wrong can be overruled by a Christ-implanted passion for righteousness. A dog chewing at an old bone will first chew his meat and then bite his rival according to the pressure of the instinct of hunger or the instinct of pugnacity. If he is very hungry, he will eat; if not, he will fight. But men are the captains of their own souls and the masters of their fates. They may be desperately hungry, and their families may be starving, but they will not surrender their integrity for a morsel of food; so they pass by an opportunity to steal bread. Even boys have their consciences. One of them told me that he felt so bad after stealing blackberry jam that he would never do it again if he starved to death.

What pity can we entertain for the hundreds of people we meet every week who are slaves to their animal impulses. Here, too, is the criterion of blame or praise. Herbert Spencer and James Martineau as well as F. H. Bradley and Leslie Stephen

agree with the Christian position that character is determined by these inner choices and not by outward results. No man can judge you by what you have accomplished in the world. Only God knows your soul, for God knows what impulses you have chosen and what motives you have followed. Frustrated goodness does not make a sinner of a saint, and the despoiled plans of a sinner do not make him virtuous. The purest soul that ever saw this earth was killed before He could even organize a following or write a book, but the centuries call Him Lord of all because the kingdom within Him was as spotless as the new fallen snow and as courageous for righteousness as God on His throne. Paul, too, blazed the way for us by his heroic example. "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection," he said. In other words, he controlled his unworthy motives, and by the power of God in his life forced all his personality to serve the cause he loved.

Another point that we must remember if we are to be masters of the inner life is that there is a razor-edge division between right and wrong. We laugh these days at the old-fashioned division between the sheep and the goats. It does seem ludicrous that a certain measure of goodness should just barely admit us to heaven, and that a little less should send us into eternal torment. Yet when Milton and Pascal and Dante and our Scripture writers propounded this doctrine, they had a great truth in mind which we have lost in our surrender of their doctrine. That truth is that there is a definite moral issue, an explicit right and a well-defined wrong before us as alternatives. It is true that a man who is severely tempted is not to be condemned so strictly

as the man who without temptation commits a wrong or chooses a lower course of action. It is true that we should be praised or blamed according to the opportunities we have spurned rather than according to a standardized measure of our achievements. But the stern and unrelenting fact remains that there is for each one of us a high way and a low.

What comfort would it have been to tell Peter that he might have betrayed his Lord as well as denied Him? The fact would still stare him in the face that he had chosen the lower and the more cowardly course when he denied his Christ. What consolation would it have meant to Judas that he might have murdered Jesus in addition to betraying Him? Judas would still be haunted by the thought that he chose the greedy and the dishonourable course of action when he might have chosen the unselfish and the honourable. What if Ananias might have refused to join the disciples and to give any of his money for the community chest? The fact remains that when Ananias lied about the proportion of his wealth which he had given, he chose the mean and unmanly path of action in preference to the noble and the true. Thus:

"To every man there openeth
A high way and a low,
And every man decideth
Which way his soul shall go."

But the greatest and most strategic movement that any of us can take in building up the inner life is to recognize the necessity of a Lord of the soul.

Man's victory over himself and choice of the highest can come only as he swears allegiance to Him who is able to save him from falling. The only salvation from a passion for unworthy things is the overruling passion for Christ. Our wavering, hesitating, goalless lives can be redeemed only by our adoption of a leader whom we can trust. Place the burning love of Christ in our hearts; with Paul let us testify that He is all to us, and we shall be fired by just one passion, which will be a passion for righteous living; a holy restlessness with things as they are; a sacred determination that an indestructible bridge shall be built to close the present gap between the world as it is and the world as it ought to be.

IV

THE CHRISTIAN'S SUPER-POWER

IN the early days of the American colonies there occurred an eclipse of the sun, which, not being understood by the settlers, was finally interpreted to mean that the judgment day was at hand. Naturally, there was general terror in the hearts of the people. In a certain legislature then in session a motion was made that the meeting adjourn on account of the impending supernatural event. But one typical Puritan would not support the motion. His explanation was as follows: "Either the day of judgment has come, or it has not come. If the day has come, I prefer to be found at my post of duty. If it has not come, I see no reason for adjournment." This calm conviction that we are working under the all-seeing eye of God and that the Lord expects us to be doing our best to the end is a practical expression of what we mean by the Christian's super-power. Others might call it the spirit of Pentecost, for the assurance that God's presence was with the early followers of Jesus even after He had gone from their midst gave them a secret motivation which led to an abrupt and revolutionary change in their mode of living. In Scripture we see Paul referring to the "effective working of His power," or, as Moffatt puts it, "Such is the gospel which I was called to serve by the endowment of God's grace which was vouchsafed me *by the energy of his power.*" (Eph. 3:7)

I most certainly sympathize with the editor of the *Congregationalist* as he deplores the attempt to restore the spirit of Pentecost by an anniversary celebration. The Christian's super-power is something too sacred and too meaningful to be stirred up with a campaign. The spirit of God in the human heart is not to be brought into being through advertising. Neither can it be adequately described in theological statement or creed. In order to be understood, it must be experienced. President Coffin of Union Theological Seminary, New York, ridicules the concepts of those who think they can do justice to the Pentecostal experience by a theological formula. He reminds us that some of the finest things in life are beyond description. For instance, if we wish a definition of a human kiss, the Century Dictionary serves us in this manner: "To smack with the pursed lips (a compression of the closed cavity of the mouth by the cheeks giving a slight sound when the rounded contacts of the lips with one another is broken)." To many people theological explanations of the Holy Spirit are about as thrilling and as satisfying as that definition of a kiss. For that reason it is well for us to-day to keep fairly well within the boundaries of human experience as we talk about the Christian's super-power.

In the first place, the spirit of God within a person means vastly increased earnestness concerning the moral environment in which he lives. I am not trying to speak disrespectfully about the religion of people who prefer to leave the moral condition of society alone. Only a few weeks ago some American travelers in Greece heard of a mystic who lived somewhere in a mountain under a rock. They

searched for three days until they finally found him. On Mount Athos they discovered him in a high labyrinth of bowlders, a place "with a pure blue sky and the sound of bees." "His eyes were clear-shining little blue stones, without fear, without self. He cried softly for joy, and knelt and thanked the people for coming to see him." He had seen but sixteen other people in his thirty-seven years there. He explained that he had been a farmer and then a soldier in Russia's wars, killing many people. He had gone to a monastery to be purified but had found the conditions too comfortable for his spiritual ambitions. So he climbed the mountain to be alone. At first he tried for forty-seven days to subsist on sea water, two sips a day, which he stole down the mountain to get. Then he changed to fresh water because the sea water gave him stomach trouble. He had hanged himself by a thong under his armpits, but the thong had broken, and he had fractured his ankle. Then he buried himself to the waist in the earth. Faint though he was, God had not been revealed to him. Now, at the age of seventy-nine, he was happily waiting to die, knowing that his soul would be satisfied when he should awake in His likeness. "Let them call me Father Ilya, because I have put away the world," he said.

There are those who wish that all of us would express our religious energy just as Father Ilya does. There have always been people who prefer what they call "the simple gospel," or a gospel which leaves this world strictly alone. Demetrius was one such man. His trade as a silversmith was entirely destroyed because of Paul's preaching. He wanted Paul arrested because he had eliminated all demands

for silver images of the goddess Diana. The Scribes and Pharisees, King Herod, the Chief Priest, Caiaphas, and many smaller officials wanted Jesus put to death because His preaching threatened to cut the allegiance of the people to them. It threatened even to deprive them of income. But the spirit of God in the heart of the Master and of His early disciples gave them a moral rigour which made a difference in the lives of the people. In our own time the spirit of God draws us into similar conflict with wrong. For example, it is well for us to recognize that, as the prince of modern American pulpiteers has just said, "At the heart of the Christian conscience of this country there is a conviction,—make up your mind to it—that the liquor traffic and the Christian gospel stand for two diverse and contradictory conceptions of personal and social life." This statement expresses very accurately the position of the churches of Christ in America to-day. It is hardly necessary to state that drunkenness is unchristian. The Apostle Paul puts this crime in a catalogue with other major offenses when he says (1 Cor. 6: 9–10): "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers—nor thieves—nor drunkards —nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God." The churches are willing, if necessary, to fight the liquor battle all over again because of the highly spiritual reason that alcoholic poisons make beasts of beings that are intended to be Godlike; they destroy the souls of men and bring them down to loathsome moral gutters.

But the Christian is not content with a world in which the temptations to debauchery are reduced to a minimum. "Have your feet shod with the

stability of the gospel of peace," urges Paul. (Moffatt, Ephesians 6:15) Occasionally, something happens to remind us that we need the stability of this gospel of peace. We are thrown up hard against the ultimate meaning of our existence, and we are forced to conclude that we are made for a life much deeper and more meaningful than even a decent existence on this earth.

Perhaps the reminder is nothing more than the news report of a sudden death. A meteor kills a wedding guest in a royal procession in Jugo-Slavia. If life is as uncertain as that, we naturally ask what comes next! Only a few days ago a man who knew he had only a few more hours to live said, "It's a good thing that life doesn't depend upon this frail little body of ours. I see now as I have not seen before that it's the soul that counts." I was first startled and then inspired the other day when I met an elderly man, who stopped me in a most earnest mood, asking, "Tell me, do you really believe there is a better world to go to when we get through here?" Let me give you just one more illustration out of the experiences of this week. I called upon an old man whom I had not seen for about two years. When I visited him the first time, he was very unreceptive. His name was on our church list, but that was all one could say about him religiously. He was quite indifferent to me or to my discussion of church affairs. But this week he was a changed man. His soul was alive. He was vitally concerned about spiritual matters. He was eager to know something definite about God. He actually talked about the spirit of God within him. He had become aware that his being was normally fitted to a larger

world than this. I would not want a better example of the Holy Spirit than I saw in him. There was all the difference in the world between the man of this week and the man of two years ago. He had been transformed by the renewing of his mind.

The more we observe the workings of the human soul, then the more firm becomes our belief that we are made for the habitation of God's spirit. We are meant to be super-power Christians. God did not so order things that the gospel of peace should be hidden from us. Helium gas was first discovered in 1868 on the sun, but later found on earth and harnessed for use in airships. So men first worshipped a friendly God in the heavens, who was yet afar off. Then He was found on earth in the person of Jesus Christ who could say, " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Then men found by experience that His spirit could be their spirit; they could prevail over their perplexities by entering into His way of life.

One of the stirring novels of our time is Joseph Hocking's *The Eternal Challenge*. Nick Trebartha is a young war veteran whose religious beliefs were entirely shattered in the world conflict. He is taken to Palestine by a rich aunt in the hope that the journey will not only restore his shell-shocked body to health but will help him as well to find his religious bearings. He meets a young girl on the journey and wanders away from the crowd with her to take a walk under the clear eastern sky outside the walls of Jerusalem. They finally come to the place called Golgotha where, tradition says, the Lord was crucified. Here in the stillness he is gripped with her wonderment.

Naomi, the girl, bursts out in an ecstasy of inspiration: "I can't realize it, I can't realize it."

"What can't you realize?" he asks.

"That His death worked such a revolution. Just think of it. He was only a carpenter; He was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger, and yet the life and thought of the whole world have been changed through Him. You said a little while ago that Christianity was dying; but think of it! In a few years after Christ's death it became greater than the philosophy of Greece. It overthrew the Roman empire. It swept over the world like a flood. Why, England, the England that you and I know, would never have been what it is but for the fact that Jesus was crucified here."

And skeptic though he was, Nick was silent; he was under the spell of the night. Doubtful of the New Testament stories as he was, his imagination took flight; his heart was strangely stirred.

"It must be true, it simply must be true," said Naomi.

"What must be true?" he asked.

"That Jesus was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world."

There is never ceasing wonder in this super-power of the spirit of Christ sweeping over the world. There is exhaustless treasure for us in the story, for this super-power was not only in Christ. It was in those who followed Him, and it can be in us if we will cultivate the life of the spirit, appropriate the riches of life that are meant for our keeping, and claim the quickening power that makes us morally earnest for a better world and fortifies us with the endless power of eternal life!

V

THE PERSONALITY OF POWER

NO one who travels from coast to coast with his eyes open can fail to notice a vast difference between people. Some are troubled, irritable, critical, out of tune with the world. Others are peaceable, friendly, master of their circumstances, living above and beyond this world of time and space.

As we note these differences and examine the backgrounds, we have a marvelous illustration of the text found in Acts 1:8. Personalities of moral power are rooted in a steady and sure faith. There is a working relationship between these people and their God, for nothing that this world offers is adequate to furnish a personality with the power of completeness. I do not mean that they are just church goers. There are church goers who are not in touch with the Holy Spirit. We should admit that from the start. Some do not even long for what the Christian religion can do for them. They remind us of an incident in Paris during the last century. A religious procession was going by, carrying a crucifix. Voltaire, the famous agnostic, was seen to raise his hat with the others as the crucifix passed by. "What!" said a friend. "Have you made terms with God?" "We salute," said Voltaire, "but we do not speak." Many people hold just that relationship to God. They salute, but they do not speak.

Some who attend church can be just as cruel, and as heartless, inconsiderate, and ruthless in their judgments of their fellows; they can be as selfish and as intolerant as others who never see the inside of a church building. It is altogether possible to attend church for sociability, for music, for beauty, for prestige, and not be aware of the Holy Spirit. They may not even be open to a direct approach of the Master. Yet such people do not apply to our case. We submit that, even in our questioning, self-sufficient, often materialistic age, the spirit of God lays hold of men, moulding personalities of sublime and magnificent spiritual power.

If I mistake not the signs of the times in the faces of human beings, there is a wistful longing for this very power about which the writer of Acts speaks. We have passed through the remorseless criticism of the nineteenth century when every religious impulse, sacred writing, or church tenet was subjected to the cold scrutiny of science in its many forms, often without the remotest sympathy for the values involved. In many places that purely destructive criticism has extended up until this very hour, leaving multitudes stranded without any anchor for life-giving convictions. Men have taken a spiritual force not of the earth earthy and have tried to examine it by the instruments of the scientic laboratory.

In other cases people have become pampered with ease and comfort until Christianity has become too difficult. They have no intellectual difficulties; they do have practical difficulties. They have tried to live without God to guide them in their course and have swung to various other religions; for instance,

the religion of beauty. No truly religious person will spurn beauty, but the æsthetic sense alone is pathetic in its powerlessness to reach the soul and make it strong. It is sad to see one who can go into rapture over a majestic mountain peak, or exquisite waterfall, or beautiful flower, and, behind that mask of beauty worship, nurse feelings of hatred, revenge, or detestation against others. I noticed just such a couple on the train coming through the Canadian Rockies. They would burst into poetry over a snow-capped peak that seemed to split the sky in two, or over a stream that came crashing down two or three thousand feet, or over canyons that yawned under them, but the next minute they would be locked in fierce verbal combat over some domestic trifle, throwing the entire railway coach into consternation by their unhappiness and incompatibility!

Still others try to substitute education for religion and to find their salvation there. James Harvey Robinson in *The Mind in the Making* laughs at the thought that the world can be rebuilt on the sentiments of brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. He sees hope only in scientific insight and scientific control. Why, then, waste our time in nebulous theories too vague to come into effective contact with actual conditions?

Now, no sane Christian wants to dispense with scientific insight and scientific control. But these very methods need to be moralized so that they will not be prostituted for ignoble ends. We need the doctrines which Robinson fails to appreciate, not as a substitute for science but as a motivating power. Professor Zimmern in *Learning and Leadership* states the case well when he says, " Science has done

damage to the spiritual interests of mankind not by what it has achieved but by what it has forgotten in the moment of achievement." The case of the Ohio professor who committed a ghastly murder reminds us that scientic learning is not enough. We believe in religious education but not in the religion of education.

If neither beauty nor education, then, provides the personal power of which we speak, what is the secret? To answer that question, let us consider now for a moment the personality of supreme power, Jesus Christ. Even His enemies grant the sweep of His power. Grant Showerman in his *Eternal Rome* weeps because Christianity destroyed the Roman Empire. The same attitude is taken by Edward Lucas White in *Why Rome Fell* and to some extent by Gibbon in his famous *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire.* The contention is that Christianity destroyed the religion of the state or emperor worship so that the unity of the empire was destroyed. They forget that lust and war had already done their deadly work when Christianity arrived. Christianity could not consistently help the Roman Empire to stand on its decayed foundations. It did, however, save civilization from utter ruin by salvaging the human elements that remained and building out of the barbarians and the Roman slaves a new foundation of character and conviction. When historians accuse Christianity of helping to disintegrate the Roman Empire, they unwittingly give it credit for tremendous power. What was it but the spirit of a peasant Jew rising to electrify very common people and to give them hope that no government could quench?

In noting the power of the personality of Christ, we must not be content with the commentaries, as valuable as they are. It would not be just to estimate Cæsar's power by the things said about him. It would be fairer to measure him by what he was able to do in expanding and welding together the Roman Empire. So we must survey what Christ actually did to the world. The record is written not only in the New Testament but in the history of mankind. When we read that record, we shall agree with Emerson that " the name of Jesus is not so much written as ploughed into the history of the world." Because Jesus was closer to God than any other figure before or since, He saw the meaning of manhood in the clearest light. Human beings were not to be playthings in the hands of an angry God but the very objective of His work. The supreme end of God's activity is the building of human personality into completeness. Therefore, Jesus forced His century and succeeding centuries to place man on a high pedestal, to see personality as something too sacred to violate and use for selfish ends. Jesus revolutionized the thinking of the world when He insisted that a man is better than property, a sheep, or a herd of swine,—better than a holy day or a sacred ritual. There simply is not that regard for man as man in non-Christian cultures.

In Christian civilizations the conscience compels the fortunate to raise up the unfortunate; demands humanity for the child and regard for womanhood; makes open war on all forms of cruelty and oppression whether victims are culturally inferior to oppressors or merely their competitors or customers. The present world-wide movement to abolish war,

accelerated and immensely hastened by the prestige of three great national leaders whom a fortunate combination of events has placed in power, Hoover, MacDonald, and Hamaguchi, is a direct expression of the Christian conscience dictating the uncompromising truth that whatever temporary values may come to any nation on account of war, the hideous devastation of human personality involved in it cannot be tolerated by a civilization that tries to be Christian. A leading Japanese Christian statesman told me that with the leaders of three nations dedicated to world peace, there was no reason why the arch monster of war could not be dealt a mortal blow in the next ten years.

Christ's power is further seen in countries like Japan, where, with only 250,000 followers, Christ wields much more power than any other religious leader. The Christians have already won notable victories for humanity and are practically the only ones fighting against the wrongs of intemperance, labour oppression, and commercialized vice. We see Christ's power in the rapid extension of missionary activity, which is nothing less than relief expeditions to people who live in horror and actual pain as a direct result of superstitions that deny them comfort and enforce the terrors of a pagan night. It is no wonder that Charles Loring Brace in his *Gesta Christi* declares, " The ideas, principles, practices now looked upon as the alphabet of ethics have either been implanted or stimulated and sustained by the religion of Jesus."

As we try to determine the secret of Jesus' power, we do not ascribe it to beauty or to learning. His soul was at home with beauty, but there is no sign

anywhere that this was His secret of power. It was one of the expressions of His character, not the cause. Although Jesus had great native intelligence, His appeal was not primarily intellectual. His power was not in cogent reasoning nor in university prestige. We arrive at the secret of His power when we note His perfect accord with God in His everyday practices. It was the spirit of God within Him that illuminated His mind and caused Him to see practical truths of the soul with utmost clarity. Jesus did not stop to analyze all the possible objections of the logicians against His religion. He kept company with God. He needed no proof of His existence, for He allowed God to exist within His very soul. Here history sees a human being under the complete control of God. Here is One whose consecration is final and to whom the will of God is as clear as the noonday sun.

What does all this mean for us? It means that we are not to despair of a humanity that could bring forth such a One as was born in Bethlehem. Again, if God is the Father Jesus represented Him to be, our whole outlook on life is transfigured. "The very winds are henceforth voices; never a senseless gust." The important thing, of course, is not the twin truths of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, but the embodiment of those truths in a person. No one can longer call those truths impossible idealism.

The exhibition of power in Christ also means that there is no reason why we should live confusedly, weakly, as victims of whim and circumstance. We too can have our periods of private prayer when we are alone with God and our

thoughts and can grow to mighty spiritual stature. We can live more meaningfully, more effectively. We can multiply our usefulness and our influence a hundred times. That is the message to us when we remember that Jesus probably had little more intellectual power than the average man, but that He learned to make the most of His personality by giving God room in the mansions of His mind and heart.

Some of you have been startled into an examination of the teaching profession. Statements have been made which are entirely without foundation, and yet we have all thought again of the strategic importance of the teacher. After all, what can you remember of your studies? You can remember the alphabet, the multiplication tables, and the states and capitals. Possibly you were taught to think for yourself regardless of the fear of being considered peculiar. One thing, however, does loom up vividly and brightly in your minds, and that is the personality of a few inspiring teachers. You have often been tempted to be lazy, to do your second best, to compromise with wrong to win profits, and the strong face of that teacher has appeared as an apparition, keeping you to your best, and leading you up the slopes through the darkness to the high plains of truth and beauty and integrity. On the train coming from Winnipeg to Minneapolis I noticed a particularly brazen young girl probably in her early twenties. She wore twice as much paint as the average girl; she made frequent trips to the platform to smoke cigarettes; her language was anything but dignified and exalted. What was my horror when I discovered that she was on her way

to take charge of a country school in Wisconsin! At the opposite end of the scale are hundreds of young women going forth to teach, who go forth as to a mission, conscious as to their influence, and eager to give their pupils the benefit of personalities enriched and fortified by the presence of the Holy Spirit of God.

To those of us who are not teachers the personality of power means just as much in different ways. As we look upon the Christ and know that His power can be ours when the Holy Spirit comes upon us, we wonder how much longer we shall live as if we never heard of the Lord of all good life.

For instance, the follower of Christ is ever praying for grace to love his enemies and serve them because they are all children of God and therefore his brethren. Perhaps your first religious exhilaration will come right there. Some one will wrong you, cut you to the heart, tempt you to retaliate. You will see the horror of human hate and will enter your closet and pray secretly and intensely that God will help you to understand one another. You will pray for blessings to come upon the one who you think is wronging you. You will pray for a sympathetic understanding of his motives. You will rise from your knees freed from the power of deadly hatred, and you will know something of the power of constructive love. Soon that will become your practice whenever things go wrong; and lo, you will be aware of the powers of the world to come. On that day you will have fulfilled in your own personal lives this radiant promise, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you."

VI

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING

THERE are three great mysteries of the Christian's faith: the mystery of infinite growth; the mystery of eternal life; and the mystery of suffering. We may truly say that the greatest of these is the mystery of suffering. At least the problem of suffering causes more disturbance to faith than any other. One element in this mystery is the varying effect which suffering has upon people.

Some persons are entirely disillusioned, spiritually, by suffering. They lose their faith in a just and good God. They seem to think that God should interfere in a miraculous way every time we human beings, as individuals or as society, make a mistake causing suffering. Most premature deaths are due to the misunderstanding of God's laws or the failure to obey those laws. They may be occasioned by an accident, by the sin of a forefather, by the carelessness of a neighbour, or by the neglect of organized society. In rare instances they may be owing to cosmic causes such as earthquakes, lightning, or tornadoes. Whatever the cause, there are many people who cannot reconcile suffering with the spirit of a Christlike God. To them the chief evidence of a God worthy of worship must be that He keeps His children absolutely safe from danger and free from suffering. To such people the *summum bonum* is safety and comfort. Since we do not

live in a world of safety and comfort, such individuals find it hard to maintain a vigorous faith in God.

Other people do not even think of the problem of suffering because they do not admit God as a serious factor in their lives. They are quickly subdued by suffering because they do not have a philosophy of life which gives suffering a place. One of Joseph Conrad's arresting stories *Outposts of Progress* concerns two men who are stationed by a trading company at a lonely post in Africa. Their work is to keep on good terms with the natives in order to buy all the ivory tusks possible at as low a price as is practicable. Their ship is due to return in a certain period to replenish their food supplies and give them whatever relief is necessary. Affairs go very well for a while. Soon, however, trouble begins. A trusted native sells six helpers into slavery for a large supply of ivory tusks. The white men are somewhat haunted by the barbarity of the deed. After many months food supplies diminish seriously, the ship being long overdue. Finally, in a fit of rage due to undernourishment and consequent nervous irritability, one of the white men kills another in a duel. When the murderer recovers from his passion, realizing what he has done, he, like Judas, goes and hangs himself. Suffering quickly brought these men to tragedy. Thousands of missionaries have gone through sufferings worse than these only to glow with a new enthusiasm and to multiply their power and influence for the Christ whom they represent.

Any of you can mention people whose greatness of soul is the direct result of a brave conflict with

intense suffering and struggle. Here, for instance, is a letter from one who has passed through white flames of anxiety because of the exceedingly dangerous illness of a very dear little son. An honour graduate from one of America's leading universities, previously not given to consideration of the mystical elements in Christianity, he writes: "I do not know for just what reason this great burden was cast upon us and then so promptly lifted. But there are two things that I do know with the same certainty that I know that I am this minute sitting at my desk writing to you. First, I know that there was a reason, and I believe that whatever purpose our heavenly Father may have had in mind has been or will be accomplished by the experience through which we are passing. It is most certainly true, as you say, that 'suffering and sorrow bring us close to spiritual realities, deepen our appreciation of life, and make richer our affections and family ties.' Second, I know that God hears our prayers. From the first we threw ourselves on Him. The response was almost miraculous since Bobby started to gain at once.—During the last day or two life has seemed to me much like an initiation into a fraternal order, during which we are led on from one experience to another and thus to an understanding of the purpose of the whole. I think I am beginning to see 'through a glass darkly.'"

It is not difficult for those who have passed through such experiences to understand the meaning of Hebrews 2:10, where God is represented to have made the Captain of our salvation "perfect through sufferings." Others, however, have not awakened to an appreciation of the deep values of

life because in this age of escalators, deep upholstering, palatial automobiles, and painless everything they have learned to live by the slogan "Safety First." Christ was made perfect because He saw that there was no royal road to character. We today seem to expect moral growth without the distress of resisting temptation toward the lower life. The great American illusion is seen in a quest for a painless Christianity. Our demand seems to be for a crossless Christ. We need to review once more the story of Jesus Christ, noticing particularly the price which He constantly paid for His moral and spiritual perfection.

Jesus was always ready to accept the inevitable persecution that comes to the soul who sees the wrongs of the present world and makes a lone stand for his ideal. The pious Pharisee thanked God every day that he was not "born a woman, a leper, or a Gentile." Jesus was willing to stand the opprobrium that came when He opposed the prevalent prejudices of His time, and when He proclaimed a gospel so much more humane and so much more spiritual than any other that it aroused the bitter antagonism of the elders. He would never consent to be a "yes-man."

In Jesus' time as in ours it was impossible to stand for anything beyond one's environment without suffering. We all have in our hearts a longing for the regard of our fellow men. The easy way is to fall in with the most popular party and be called a "regular fellow." Unless we do so we shall be called a crank, a prude, or a fanatic. In Jesus' environment there were four principal groups: the Sadducees or aristocrats, who enjoyed

the favour of the Romans; the Pharisees, who thought that the Romans would be overthrown by miraculous means as soon as the Jews succeeded in fulfilling every jot and tittle of the law; the Zealots, who wanted to bring about an immediate revolution for freedom; and the Essenes, who were the other-worldly folk like John the Baptist, living in the wilderness on berries and honey, seeking God in seclusion from the turmoil of the world. Jesus attached Himself to none of these parties. They were all partly wrong. The Sadducees were self-satisfied; the Pharisees thought religion was a matter of performing correctly ecclesiastical etiquette; the Zealots chose the way that always leads to defeat,—the way of bloodshed; the Essenes escaped from the problem of living as they retired to the waste places to pray, and fast, and to ignore the human pathos of their time. We can easily imagine what heroism it must have taken for Jesus to stand against all these powerful parties.

In achieving moral perfection Jesus had to suffer the lot of those who take the initiative. The deadening tendency of ordinary people if they recognize anything wrong at all is to do nothing about it, to let matters ride along, to keep affairs as smooth as possible during the present generation, leaving the next to manage things as best they may. It requires a brave soul to take the lead in moral initiative. Jesus seemed to agree with Robert Louis Stevenson, who said, "The only sins worth thinking about are sins of omission." The trouble with Dives was not that he had committed any crime but that he had done nothing in the presence of poverty. The five virgins had not committed any overt act;

they had simply done nothing while they should have been busy. Jesus' picture of the last judgment was alive with people who could be charged with no crime except the crime of omission. A long train of human injustices and suffering had passed by them, but they had been perfectly stationary through it all.

On the contrary, Jesus, like the first soldier over the top, faced the fierce fire that sears a moral pioneer. His church was wrong. Instead of staying away from it, He cleansed it of its iniquity, driving the money changers from the temple and making a stand for religion pure and undefiled. The Pharisees were wrong. Many people knew it. Jesus raised His voice against their perversion of religion.

I wonder what would happen if we were willing to take the offensive in the interest of moral achievement? One man who has just returned from Russia has given us one good thing about the communists to consider:

"I tell you," he says, "if we Christians believed in the kingdom of Christ as those men believe in the rule of the proletariat; if we put into the cause of Christ one half what those men put into the cause of communism, there would be no Bolshevist menace, and the kingdom of God would come."

With all due regard to the modern stress on "self-expression," we ought to remember that character building is partly a process of suffering, of denying ourselves certain gratifications in the interest of the expression of the higher self. When we advocate self-expression, we must be careful to explain just what kind of self we wish to express. If we

insist on expressing our lowest self, we shall soon have no higher self to express. One man has made the matter clear by using the expression, "the orchestration of impulses." As in an orchestra all our impulses must be governed by a director. If one trumpeter wants to loom up above all the others, he must subdue his desire for fame in the interest of the whole ensemble. We have certain impulses which must be rigorously held in check, or the total harmony of our personalities will be destroyed. The love impulse is holy until it goes out of bounds; then it wrecks our happiness forever. The ambition to achieve is noble until it becomes perverted into a lust for unearned fame or an insatiable eagerness for monetary gain, regardless of obligations to our fellow men and without reference to the ordinary laws of justice and ethics. The desire for self-preservation is commendable until it becomes exaggerated to an abnormal emphasis on material security, which brings the victim to the nightmare of miserly thrift, breaking down the capacity for abundant and joyful living. All our natural desires have their place and will contribute to a happy life if we keep them under the control of the Master Conductor. And whom can we choose for our leader except Him who was made perfect through sufferings?

One of the most inspiring of Balzac's stories is one called *Christ in Flanders*. It is a legend, but it carries eternal truth to our minds and our hearts. Just as a small passenger boat is about to leave a harbour for a short voyage, a strange figure comes on board. He is a young man, dressed very plainly, with a friendly voice, and with the demeanour of a

gentleman. The boat is crowded and dark. In one end are people of the so-called upper classes, apparently well supplied with the goods of this world, and very haughty. In the other are common people, many very poor, some in distress. He is welcomed among the poor, for He is evidently one of their number. They all turn their attention to Him, not trying to hide their admiration that a man of His breeding and stamp should appear in their midst, garbed in their attire. The folk in the other end of the boat smirk and sneer at what they consider naive respect for an ordinary fellow. When once in a while a light gleams in His face, people see that His is no common countenance; it is aflame with divinity, with tender love, with the presence of an other-worldly spirit. Soon a storm arises, and the passengers are stricken with fear. The stranger is able to calm many of the people, but not all respond to His peaceful and trustful attitude. Finally, the boat capsizes, and men, women, and children are hurled into the waters. The stranger steps calmly on to the sea and walks. Others see Him, take His hand, and follow Him as He walks to the opposite shore in safety. But some passengers try in vain to walk on the sea with the young and strange man. One tries, but sinks as he thinks of his sins. Another essays to walk, but wants to carry his bag of gold with him, and sinks. Another attempts, but doubts very seriously that he is able, and so sinks. All who succeed are those who are willing to leave everything behind and in utter faith to follow the Christ, who, the legend says, came to earth in Flanders on that night never to return again. The legend delivers this truth to us in new form: if we

would live, we must suffer the loss of things that do not matter; we must deny certain desires; we must follow Him in faith!

Through suffering Jesus attained perfection in human sympathy. He faced death in the home, dire poverty, sickness, and ostracization from the family circle. But the fires of hardships only refined His capacity for pity toward those in need. Did you ever think of suffering in terms of a new deepening of your understanding of life? Or do you only become bitter under the goad? Are there not things worth more than mere comfort or safety? Is suffering not worth while if through this means we can know the priceless spiritual richness of sympathy? Was not Goethe right when he wrote:

> *"Who never ate with tears his bread,*
> *Who never through the troubled hours,*
> *Weeping sat upon his bed,*
> *He knows ye not, ye heavenly powers."?*

Through suffering Jesus attained perfection of faith. The greatest Christians I have ever known have been those who have learned the reality of God in the hour of severe trial. Our friendships always mean more to us after our friends have met a great need in our lives. Mothers are usually closer to their children and inspire more tender emotions, not because they are necessarily more worthy than fathers, but because the child has had experiences of great need which the mother has been able to satisfy in the most intimate and constant manner. If religious certainty is one of the great prizes which we seek, we may well count as a real gain any suffer-

ing which helps us to realize a personal assurance of God's friendliness and love. God is not likely to have a very great opening into the heart of a man who has escaped sorrow and struggle and strife and suffering. I believe that God was closest to our Lord when on the cross the Master said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do," and "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

I once had the rare experience of witnessing a storm at sea. On the decks of the great liner on which I sailed were scores of little playthings for young and old alike. Croquet sets, billiard balls, horseshoes, hammocks, long chairs, a miniature baseball outfit were all scattered on the deck. Soon men were dispatched to gather up all these incidentals, all these trappings, and leave the decks clear for the storm to lash as it would. I cannot begin to tell you how beautiful was that storm. Instead of regretting it, I have always been grateful that I could see a storm in mid-ocean. When storms arise that seem threatening to us, we automatically take in the trappings that we in less serious moments think are essential to life. We see life, then, through the eyes of God, if only we will let the spirit of God control us.

Most of us would give all that we have if we could attain perfection in moral achievement, in human sympathy, in godly faith. Perhaps we try our best at times to copy the life plan of the Master and fail. The heroic Perella in a story by William Locke tried endlessly to copy a great painting by her master, but, despite all her efforts to reproduce his technique and his method, she failed. Finally a friend came to her and said: "What you need is a

vision of what the Master painter had in his soul; the details of technical method will then take care of themselves." She waited until the vision came, until she felt deeply the passion which had moved her teacher when he painted the picture. Spontaneously, skillfully, and perfectly she reproduced the painting!

We are quite likely to fail as Christians if we try simply to duplicate the exact technique in detail of Jesus' life. During the days that are just ahead, days when we ought to feel particularly devoted in our desire to be Christians, days that should mean complete spiritual transformation and revolution for us all, let us try to visualize life as Christ tried to see it, as He painted the eternal picture of God and man on the canvas of men's minds and hearts. Let us see that nothing else matters except our relationship to God as our Father and to man as our brother. Let us give ourselves completely to the cause of justice, human betterment, a Christlike world. Let us lose ourselves in a glorious battle for righteousness. Let us take the suffering and sacrifice that will come to Christian soldiers and offer it gladly as a gift to the King. Then we shall have learned to live. Then we shall know the secret of moral achievement; we shall know more of the vastness of human sympathy; we shall find in the very hour of our trial that God is our eternal Friend.

VII

SURPRISE ATTACKS

ABOUT two years ago there passed away a man who was noted for a life of extraordinary usefulness. Many people were interested in knowing something of the motives which had impelled this person in his unselfish pursuit of opportunities for doing good. A clue was discovered when some one found in one of his pockets the following poem, crumpled and underscored, and embroidered with marginal notes:

" The clock of life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.

Now is the only time you own,
Give, Love, Toil with a will,
Place no faith in to-morrow,
For the clock may then be still."

These lines state in modern terms what Paul was trying to say to his Thessalonian disciples in this fifth chapter of the first book. Moffatt translates the third verse, " When ' all's well ' or ' all's safe ' are on the lips of men, then all of a sudden, destruction is upon them." " But you are children of the light," continues Paul in this passage, and he warns us, " Therefore, let us not sleep as do others,

but let us watch and be sober." Throughout this chapter he implies that Christians are prepared for the heavy blows that come sooner or later to every man.

Spiritual preparedness for the surprise attacks of life is the primary need of every man. We have in mind the possibility of our own immediate departure from this earth. That in itself is a sobering thought. An intimate friend of mine said with great fervour: "My seventy years have gone by like a flash. Now it's all over, and my chance is gone. The night cometh when no man can work." As he said that, I was not thinking so much of his own opportunities for service. Those of you who knew this man would testify that he had not lost many such opportunities. I was thinking of the fact that my own privilege of being a sympathetic friend to him was about to pass away. I thought of several things I had intended to do for him and with him, but which I had postponed. I wished that I had lived more solidly on the philosophy of the other man who had carried that poem which ended,

"Place no faith in to-morrow,
For the clock may then be still!"

No one who lives with his eyes open in this dangerous age will doubt that every man has a date with adversity. Industrial injuries, automobile accidents, disease, death, vocational disappointments, hostile criticism, business failures, or moral defeat sooner or later lash the souls of men and test their foundations to the depths. Some of the greatest inspirations of my life have come from watching

well fortified Christians bear with heroism the worst of these human disasters. In other cases I have been stirred with pity for people who have utterly collapsed under the first blows of discouragement.

A few days ago a former professor in the University of Illinois spoke to the students of the Brookwood Labour College on the subject *How to be Happy Though in Jail.* He let them know that if they intend to assume positions of leadership in promoting the cause of labour, they should count on jail sentences. He told them how to keep alive their sense of humour in prison, how to keep their intellectual interests awake, and how to serve the cause of labour behind the bars. Now, what can we advise for people who are more certain to meet trouble than are labour organizers?

In the first place we should listen to the findings of the reliable psychologist. He tells us, for instance, that the "forget it" method in case of anxiety is or should be a thing of the past. There are times when our minds should be diverted from our trials, but it is nervously injurious to try to evade something which we fear. Financial losses, sorrows, and disappointments should be faced frankly until we are at last ready to understand that in the citadels of our souls we are "more than conquerors" over these things. We can always find a way out of a hard situation. We need not suffer with a sense of frustration. There is no comfort like the truth when it is faced with a thorough consideration of the ultimate solution at the command of every Christian. Just this week a man who is going through fires fierce enough to destroy the fibre of the strongest revealed to me the secret of his

marvelous fortitude. "These words," he said, "are continually coming to my mind: 'For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'"

And then the psychologist tells us that we should not try to hide our troubles but should talk to some intimate friend, doctor, pastor, or loved one whom we can trust. Repression is always serious. The mere discovery of the root cause of our fear or of our "inferiority complex" may lead to an immediate removal of our difficulties. Very often doctors do an immense good just by listening to the symptoms of their patients. The same is true of the right kind of parents, teachers, pastors, or other leaders.

Here, then, is a man with an exceptional inferiority complex. He is afraid to try anything on his own initiative. Consultation proves that in his early boyhood his father was extremely severe with him whenever he made a mistake. The result of this unwise policy is that he has become afraid to undertake anything lest he make a mistake and consequently suffer.

Here, again, is a boy who is exceedingly pugnacious. Tracing his history, we find that in early youth he was praised too extravagantly as a prodigy. The result was that he could not bear any position lower than the head of the class. When he was demoted to the "B" class, the taunts of the boys angered him out of all proportion to what would be normal.

Another hint from these psychologists is to blame yourself for your troubles as much as possible. People who blame others or retreat into day dreams suffer the most and have the least hope of recovery. After you have blamed yourself, you will of course seek means of improvement, knowing that they are at your disposal.

It is interesting to note that the best psychologists declare that in a life-guiding religious faith men have the greatest fortification against catastrophe. James, MacDougal, James Bissett Pratt, and MacKenzie strongly emphasize the therapeutic value of religion. Thus MacKenzie says, "A man's completeness will be found in fulfilling the will of God and becoming perfectly adjusted to it.—What fear can undermine a man's mental balance if he knows that 'he is hid with Christ in God' and that he is possessed of 'that perfect love which casteth out fear'?" Of course, religion in the minds of such men is not mere knowledge of God or of Christ. It is a strong dominating sentiment taking command of all other sentiments and keeping them in their proper sphere. The so-called "self-expressionist" says, "Relieve your distresses by giving your instincts free rein." The true psychologist tells you that self-expression without regard to the natural purposes of your instincts will lead to a dismal wreckage of your personality. By giving yourself entirely into the hands of the Christlike God, you acquire a unified personality, saving your instincts for their ultimate purposes, and thus achieving the kind of life which leads to the happiness which God intends for every person.

Both James and Pratt bring out this difference

between self-expression and self-realization in their definitions of conversion. Says James, "Conversion is the process gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto *divided* and *consciously wrong, inferior* and *unhappy* becomes *unified* and *consciously right, superior,* and *happy* in consequence of its firmer hold on religious realities." Says Pratt, "The essential thing about conversion is just the unification of character and the achievement of a new self."

It is not hard to convince mature people that they need the mighty fortress of God to give adequate defense against the surprise attacks of life. But very often we see young married people, especially, settling down under the illusion that they do not need the sobering responsibility of religion in their gay lives. They contrast the dim religious aisles with the glitter of the great white ways of New York or Boston or Chicago. Whereas their grandparents looked upon church as "an exciting break in a monotonous week," they look upon church as "a monotonous break in an exciting week." Their income is regular and increasing. They have a good home, many friends, a radio, and an automobile. What does religion hold out for them? Why should they look ahead forty years to the probability of misfortune? They will keep the "sunny side up," and that will be religion enough for them! This argument may sound perfectly logical to the undiscerning, but as a matter of fact it does not stand the test in the crucible of human experience. We may ride in the new sixteen cylinder high speed cars, move through all the excitements of America's greatest playgrounds, and go to the limit in dissipation of inherited means or energy,

but eventually there comes a sickening saturation with artificial and sensual forms of life. As the body becomes "surfeited with cloying sweets and canned goods," so the soul soon turns in disgust against the very things in which it has reveled and longs for "the vitamins and the tonic of simplicity and spirituality."

We note this tendency in the larger sphere of history. Even Greek and Roman, after having drunk the cup of conquerors to the dregs, turned at last with avidity to the simple essentials of the Christian gospel. We see it in the lives of great men. Saint Augustine of the fourth century tasted all that license had to offer in the undisciplined career of North African university life. But his great mind could not live on chaff. He began his long search which ended not until in St. Ambrose of Milan he found one who could lead him to a full acceptance of the Christ and the consequent consuming passion for righteousness, which gave him command over himself and gave immeasurable growth to his soul. When this great convert said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself; our hearts are restless until they repose in Thee," he seemed to anticipate Francis Thompson, who, in the *Hound of Heaven* tells how he was pursued by the Divine Presence, disturbing him with the joy of elevated thoughts and calling him even in the midst of his most revolting escapades to the inescapable conclusion, "All things betray thee who betrayest me." With "deliberate speed" and "majestic instancy," that better self pursued him as he "fled down the nights and down the days;—down the arches of the years—down the labyrinthine ways" of his own

mind, unable to escape the call of God to a life unified and glorified with Him. The advice of Paul is not to wait until the surprise attack comes before deciding what we should do for protection. If we do, then like Augustine we shall spend the rest of our lives trying to heal the unnecessary and ghastly wounds which we have made on the great tapestries of our souls. We shall probably find that it is too late to meet the crisis at our hand.

A mother came to me with a rather touching story. She admitted that for the first four years of her married life she and her husband had thought little or nothing about the church. They hid in the false shell of self-sufficiency which I have described. But when her curly-haired, blue-eyed, affectionate little Evelyn became three years of age, she came to her mother with a wistful request. She said, " Mother, why don't you teach me to say my prayers the way Eunice does? " Eunice had been allowed to stay all night with Evelyn, and, as her custom was, she had asked God to bless her brother, her father, her mother, and her playmates. There was something in Evelyn's being that demanded that intimacy and that close friendliness with God. Her mother told me how distressed she was to admit that she was completely disqualified to tell her little girl about prayer. She felt like an utter hypocrite, she said, to try to pretend a mastery even of the technique of prayer. A great opportunity had come; a time for spiritual awakening in her little girl was at hand, and she was not ready for the surprise attack. She realized at last that she had been trying to live in the shallows and had starved her own soul.

How different was the lot of the father of John Patton! The time came when the lad must leave home, for his ambition called him to greater achievements than could ever be wrought out on the farm. His journey to Glasgow was to be made on foot, and his father insisted on going with him as far as the turn of the road. Finally the time came for departure. Family ties are tender in those Scottish families, and words failed the senior Mr. Patton as he tried to give his son some parting words of advice. He simply choked out, "Good-bye, my son, and God bless you." When John had gone a few yards, he turned back for one last glimpse of his father. There he stood, his hat removed, his head bowed in prayer. John knew that he was praying for him, and through the long and intensely useful life which he led, even in far distant China, that picture remained in his memory, steadying him in times of temptation, comforting him in times of disappointment, challenging him in times of stress and strain.

The growing pains in our own souls will be relieved when we learn that Christ is seeking us as an elder brother, when we know that God searches for us as a friend. He wants us that we may taste the deep and permanent values of rugged character. The high points in my ministry have come when after a service like this, young men have said, "When may I see you? I would like to make arrangements to become a church member." I can see that in their heart of hearts they are really saying, "I want to crusade for the Master." Perhaps there are readers who have it on their hearts to do this very thing. You may feel that the spirit of God has pursued you as a shadow, and that now you

are ready to make the great surrender that shall mean abundant life. If so, look upon Him as a Friend, as one who wants to help you face your weaknesses and overcome them. As Ralph Sockman puts it, "Christ comes not with a search warrant, but as a supper guest." "Behold," He says, "I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come to him and will sup with him and he with me."

VIII

FIRST-HAND RELIGION

"NOT since the third century has Christianity passed through such a dangerous and difficult pass as that which confronts it in our own day." This astounding and disturbing statement is made by Dr. Albert C. Knudson in his book *Present Tendencies in Religious Thought.* In the third century the Christians were forced to make their religion feel at home in a Greek atmosphere. Many serious thinkers thought that a faith which was founded on Jewish tradition could never be accepted by a civilization as different in every respect as that of ancient Greece. To-day we face a situation that seems even more precarious. We are not passing into a new area where mythologies and pagan rites threaten to modify our religion beyond all recognition. We are moving from an age of authority to an age of "utility and reason and experience," to quote again from Dean Knudson's book.

Our age is distinctly scientific in temper. We are taught not to accept any theory or any doctrine merely because it lies embedded in a sacred book or a holy creed. The age of a belief does not add to its credibility in modern circles. Our theories of chemistry, of astronomy, of sociology, of religion are being dynamited by the ruthless hand of the scientist and examined with his microscope and telescope. "We believe a thing, not because it is old

or because it is new, but because it is true," to use the words of Dr. David D. Vaughan. Thus it is becoming increasingly hard to keep any political theory of the state popular because of tradition. We no longer think that our courts or our governors are infallible. When they issue verdicts and manifestoes, we are not silenced unless they are able to convince us of the justice of their opinions.

This is serious enough in matters of politics. It means that the era of arbitrary measures is fast going by. Practically everything that is done by our officials, high or low, is compelled to pass the scrutiny of a watchful public opinion. But in matters of religion it is more serious because the average man has not the conveniences for thinking necessary to enable him to master the deep fundamentals of his faith. If he is not willing to accept the verdict of the specialists in this field, he will lose his grip on the essentials unless he will take time to think them through for himself and see that the foundations of his faith are of solid rock.

Putting it in bold and bald terms, we mean that there is a growing tendency not to accept any religious teaching because it is in the Bible. There is an inclination to doubt reports that God ever spoke to men unless we find that God speaks to men to-day. It is significant for us that Jesus relied, not on the Bible for His understanding of God, but upon evidence that is available to you and to me. He looked at nature and saw the marks of the divine character. "Love your enemies," He said, "that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and

on the unjust." God cares for the fowls of the air. Are men not of greater worth? He clothes the lilies of the field. Why, then, should we put uppermost our concern for dividends?

Not only do we look into nature for the vindication of our faith to-day; we also inquire into the needs of mankind to see if they are really met in Jesus' way of life. Without going into detail, we would say that a chief need of every man is for a unified personality. The source of much unhappiness and distress is that the various desires and inclinations have not been merged and coördinated as they should be. The modern "flapper" mother without any definite character is torn between a desire for a home and a longing for a good time. The business man stands between the two horns of dilemma. He wants to prosper, and yet he wants to be honest and preserve his self-respect. To the would-be "A" student, the temptation is to use dishonest means in getting that thesis written or that book review handed to the professor. It is a conflict between a desire to succeed and the nobler aspiration for self-respect. The young woman wants to have a home, and yet she wants to do her duty to her widowed mother. Everybody wants to be popular, and so there is a perpetual conflict between our own ideas of right and the conventionalities necessary to keep our place in the social whirl.

What has the gospel to offer to an age like this? It has unqualified decisiveness of character. Jesus, seeing into the depths of human need, will not accept lukewarm discipleship. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," He says; and again, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not

with me scattereth abroad." The Christian who has sworn himself to the services of Christ is no longer torn between perplexing alternatives. He is governed by principles that stand far above the fog of ethical conclusion. His personality is integrated, and all his instincts and desires are bent in one direction. They are consecrated to one purpose; pledged to one Master, even Christ. His life is happy because no longer self-centered, filled with pride and envy and greed. He is absorbed with his victorious quest for God, and is totally oblivious to persecution or the misfortunes of earth. He baffles the world with his ability to say with Paul, "Troubled, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, yet possessing all things."

The permanence of our faith to-day is rooted in the possibility of a Biblical experience of God for every Christian. Particularly illuminating, in this connection, are the new volume by Oscar L. Joseph, *Ringing Realities,* and the volume by Joseph Fort Newton published in 1912 under the title *The Eternal Christ.* Bushnell's book of deeply spiritual *Sermons for the New Life* will always be valuable. Dr. Newton spoke of them as "logic tipped with mystical fire." Are you discouraged as you compare your faint mysticism with that of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Paul, St. Francis, St. Theresa, or even Wordsworth, who felt a sublime presence that disturbed him with the "joy of elevated thoughts"? Follow the light you have! You must have had insights into the reality of God many times in your life. You looked

at some architectural wonder; you climbed a mountain and won for yourself a vista that exalted your soul and made you sure of God; you beheld a sunset or a flower, tinted skies, the laughter of little children, the sweep of the majestic ocean, or the beauty of woodlands. You saw a deed of unselfishness so far removed from the standards of this earth that you could not but say, "The place whereon I stand is holy ground."

"How can you tell a religious experience from a hallucination?" is the question still asked by psychologists. Dr. Charles E. Raven wrote a book two years ago called *The Creator Spirit.* Writing on this subject, he said that when a man allows Christ to have a chance at his life, the consequences are shown by a deepening of the æsthetic, the intellectual, and the ethical nature. Christians love the beautiful because it helps them to see their way to God. They are quickened intellectually because they now think in terms of the universe and of all mankind. They are refined morally, for their bodies are temples of God, and all life is sacred unto Him.

I do not share the modern pessimism concerning the church, often expressed in popular literature. The spirit of man is more consistent with Christianity than it ever has been in recent centuries. But if there is a vital weakness in our Christian life, it is to be found in our satisfaction with second-hand religion. We often think we can satisfy our souls with the frozen forms and petrified customs of other generations, and so we try to cure deep-seated spiritual sickness with surface cures of ethical healing salve, with moral resolutions, or careful revision of etiquette and good form. A good spiritual sur-

geon knows that the only permanent cure is a restoration of the original spirit of fellowship with the Author of all character and all morality, all pity and all love. Only first-hand religion is effective.

Professor Newhold became very useful to society when he finally succeeded in translating the formula for making copper salts, which was discovered by Roger Bacon six hundred years before. The formula worked exactly as described even though the six centuries had passed. The glory of the Bible is that, although it was written in a strange language, it sets the guideposts for spiritual discoveries, and its formulas work to-day just as accurately as they did two thousand years ago.

We think of Paul's conversion as phenomenal; yet in our own day we have seen men reclaimed. They have become new creatures under the sovereign power of their new loyalties. They have survived their fearful struggles with a serenity and a quiet joy that lead you to a conviction that they draw on the eternal fountains of God's strength. They know the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

The permanent groundwork of our faith in the Christ of the ages is His availability for us to-day. We can write an apostle's creed of our own; we can draw up a statement of our faith based on experiences that are essentially like those of the Bible pioneers. We can see Holy Cities as John saw them. We visualize a redeemed society and work toward the high goal of a Christ-centered world. We can say with Paul, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; . . . behold, all things are become new."

IX

THE GREAT CONFESSION

THE more we contemplate the vastness of the mystery in human life, the more we are compelled to marvel at the mind and spirit of the humble Galilean Christ, who seemed to grasp the needs of mankind as by a powerful intuition, and who seemed to understand the will of God through the presence of the spirit of the eternal in His soul! Think of the mighty assurance which a man must have to say, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is heaven."

To-day life is more mysterious and vast than it was in the time of Christ. We know more about the universe, and we think we know more about the origin of the earth. Eddington, the famous astronomer, explains that our universe has ten billion stars, but that our universe is only an island in the universe of universes. As far as the telescope can fathom, there are other islands of universes, the nearest of which is nine hundred thousand light years away. In all this space traffic is thin, there being only about one chance in a hundred million that one star may collide with another. Once upon a time, many millions of years ago, our sun and a star came so close that the attraction raised a great tidal wave, causing jets of matter to spurt from the sun. These particles being carried around the sun

by angular momentum did not fall back again, but condensed into small globes, which we now call the planets, nine in number, of which the earth is one. The interior of the star has a temperature of about ten million degrees above zero. Only the planets, of which there are few in number, are cool enough for habitation.

On such a spinning ball of matter, after many experiments, after long ages of preparation, man appeared. Our earth was born out of this immeasurable void. Here we are between the twin mysteries of birth and death. There is within us an invincible longing for the favourable opinion of our fellow men, for progress, for knowledge. But there is a more interesting restlessness with our moral incompleteness. The most offensive thing you can say of any one is that he is immoral. Other creatures may not be disturbed with such questions, but man is eager for moral satisfactions. Moreover, we are aware of spiritual destiny. No race of men has yet been discovered that was devoid of God-consciousness. Edwin Markham quotes Herbert Spencer to the effect that a universal demand points to a fact. Men cannot live without the conviction that the mind energy behind the shadows of the universe is a personality, a conscious being with a power to direct action, to know, to feel, to love, to aspire. As we study the trend of human development, there is evidence apparent that God's purpose in creating life on the planet was to bring into existence beings capable of developing spiritual and moral qualities. We believe that the high purpose of creation is the evolution of Godlike persons. This is not a mere idle wish held by a few superstitious

people. It is firmly imbedded in the very consciousness of mankind as a fundamental axiom of thought. The religion of the ignorant may seem to border on childish credulity, but it is a revelation of the same underlying religious nature which we find in scientists like Eddington or Michael Pupin or Robert Millikan. In between, there are people who have arrived at half-way houses of thought, who declare with great finality that they do not believe in God. Francis Bacon, three hundred years ago, described some of his fellow men in that condition. He said, "A little philosophy may lead man away from God, but more philosophy will bring him back."

In the midst of this everlasting quest for an answer to the soul's questions comes Jesus Christ. He is not a strange creature, half human and half divine, as some have supposed. He is one with like feelings and like experiences with ourselves. He became intimately aware of God, saw clearly His will for mankind, was consequently endued with the spirit of power and of might over wrong, and felt His personal responsibility for world leadership. If we were to put into three words the meaning of right living for Jesus Christ, we should say, honesty, friendliness, and godliness.

Jesus above all things seemed to detest hypocrisy, which is a refined form of dishonesty. We must have truthful people if we are to maintain any kind of civilization. Dishonesty and insincerity are especially reprehensible in religion. We can never expect anything but disaster for any church or any people who are disloyal to truth.

We all deplore, for instance, the present persecution of religion in Russia. Russians do not deny

that there is a determined effort to eradicate religion root and branch from the nation. The only religious services that are permitted are those in which the chants are unintelligible and unrelated to present conditions. Preaching is not allowed, at least without so many restrictions that it cannot be called the preaching of the gospel. The most dangerous work in Russia is the preaching of the Christian religion. It means almost sure persecution or death. Yet, when we study the background of the only church which the Russians know, we can hardly expect any other result.

Christianity has had a sad history in Russia. It came in under as crass a dealing as any that shadows the pages of church history. The despot, Vladimir, about a thousand years ago, paid for the hand of the Byzantine princess by commanding all his people to become baptized as Christians. Vladimir himself was made the first in a long line of Russian Orthodox Church saints. Priests were paid by the government, and were therefore the agents of the administration. The confessional was used to extract evidences of disloyalty to the tsar and was turned into a private detective agency.

A few years ago a prominent American churchman addressed some students in Moscow on the American Christian movement. After the address some of the students said that the ideals were worthy, but that they were not those of the church. The church had for a thousand years been a symbol of oppression, and now all churches, good, bad, and indifferent are suffering the outcome. Dishonesty in the guise of religion will wreak more damage than under any other guise. Probably that was the

reason Jesus attacked the Pharisees with such ferocity. He knew that they were making religion distasteful to every one because of their perversion of the faith, because of their insincerity and cant.

Jesus saw also in unfriendliness or selfishness the direct antithesis of God's will. Love is the parent word of unselfishness. Jesus taught that we should regard all men as members of our family, as far as our concern for them is involved. As we read the letters of Paul and the epistles of John or any other apostolic literature inspired by Christ, we see this as the keynote of their philosophy of living. Selfishness, or the lack of brotherly regard for one another, is as suicidal for society as is dishonesty. Our widespread disorders by the unemployed will become more widespread and more serious unless we, the wealthiest nation in the world, begin to show some interest in the plight of our millions who have been thrown out of work by our machines. The least we can do is to display a sympathetic attitude toward their pleas for relief. The worst we can do is to break up their demonstrations with tear gas and bayonets!

The spiritual losses from selfishness or unfriendliness are pathetic. The most unhappy people I know are the ones who have placed themselves in solitary confinement. They have concentrated on themselves to the exclusion of others until they have no friends and no fellowship left. They are as lonely in their home town as you would be if you left Bridgewater and settled down in the loop district of Chicago. You would be tortured by the social ice sheet which would surround you, and you would understand the horrors of a friendless world.

"O doom beyond the saddest guess,
As the long years of God unroll,
To make thy dreary selfishness
The prison of thy soul."

What then is salvation? It is rescue from selfishness and dishonesty and Godlessness by the leadership of Jesus Christ, the one Figure in the world and in all history qualified to save us. When we seek a leader, we ask: "Are his ideals true and practicable?" The power of Jesus' life to-day gives us a final demonstration of the truth and the workability of His ideals. Of course, our interpretation of His teachings will necessarily change as will our interpretation of God and the Bible. But, as Eddington says, "If our so-called facts are changing shadows, they are shadows cast by the light of constant truth." Again he says, "Our belief is not that all the knowledge of the universe which we hold so enthusiastically will survive to the letter; but a sureness that we are on the right road. There is a sureness which is different from cock sureness."

To confess Christ as our Saviour and to make His ideals ours; to subject ourselves to His power is to call in reinforcements for our lives. The crisis has then passed just as in the case of an army which has received additions of two or three regiments. Fighting is still to be done, but the distant victory is practically assured. Salvation is not a matter of accepting a creed. It is not an intellectual process alone, although no one favours a thoughtless turning to Christ. Glenn Frank says, "We live ourselves into right thinking more surely than we think ourselves into right living." By living according to

Christ's revelation of God's will, we become sure of our faith. A Y. M. C. A. student complained one day to his Bible teacher that prayer was very unreal to him. His instructor told him that prayer would be real if he prayed for specific things necessary to conform his life to God's will. Every evening for a while, then, he prayed for God's forgiveness for specific acts which he knew were not Christian. Uncharitable attitudes toward fellow employes or toward his employer, or any other unchristian conduct would come into his prayer. In the morning he would pray that God might help him to be honest in this or that particular deal which he would soon confront, or that God would enable him to treat this peculiar man as he should be treated. In a week he was ready to tell his teacher that prayer had become real and that God had become a certainty. There was no more doubt in his soul. Once more a disciple had verified the Master's promise, "He that doeth the Father's will shall know the doctrine." Fellowship with God is dependent upon fellowship with man! Those to whom prayer is most vital have felt most intimately their ties with other children of God. Nada de Braganca's lines on *Prayer* give beautiful expression to this eternal truth:

> *"O God, I love Thee in the stars at night*
> *Under the still eternity of sky;*
> *Teach me to love Thee in the passer-by,*
> *For Thou hast said that this is loving right.*
> *I hear Thee in the stars whose silence sings,*
> *And in the shout of dawn Thy voice I know;*
> *Teach me to hear Thee in the joy and woe*
> *Of men who speak of trivial earthly things.*

I see Thee when the world is full of sleep
Walking upon the moon-path of the sea;
Teach me by all the tears of Calvary
To know Thee in the eyes of all that weep.

* * * * * *

There are so many things that I would say,
God, soul of beauty, teach me how to pray!"

Did you ever notice how Jesus links His most radical demands for moral revolution with His conception of God? "Love your enemies," He urges, "bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:44, 45) We love our enemies that we may really become children of God! Conversely, we may say, we keep company with God in order that we may have the power and the will to live in the spirit of friendliness and honesty toward all men. To confess Christ is to begin our growth toward the highest and best that life has to offer us. If we confess Christ before men, He will be in a position to confess us before our Father who is in heaven!

There are readers to whom Christ makes this challenge of confession. We cannot evade the eternal question, "What are we going to do with Christ?" We need not commit ourselves with relation to other beings in world history, but the spirit of Christ pursues us. It is true that if we confess Christ, we are establishing our relationships between ourselves and our God; we are setting our attitude toward our fellow men and toward life; we are determining the outcome of our great adventure on

this little planet and in the midst of these many mysteries which surround us. We are reënacting either the part of the disciple who said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the word of eternal life"; or the part of the thoughtless rabble that cried, "Crucify him, Crucify him."

Are you ready for the great confession? Will you venture in earnest to climb toward the high plane of honesty, friendliness, and fellowship with the God whom we see in Christ?

X

TRAIL-CLIMBERS

TO many of us the most alluring vacation experience is mountain climbing. There is exhilaration in reaching the heights from which one can thoughtfully look down, seeing life from a lofty perspective, and feeling the inspiration of the high altitude. Whatever the other attractions may be in climbing, I think that practically every man, woman, and child who likes to follow the trail to the top of the mountain will confess that there is a quiet force in the moment of meditation which lifts him far above ordinary levels. No one can be quite the same after he has fought his way up a winding trail, finally reaching the summit where he can feel the sharp, bracing winds and sense the beauty of God's peace. In such a place the heart responds to the lines by that pastor-poet, Jesse W. Bunch:

"God made the mountains, massive, wide, and high;
He etched them with His hands against the sky.
He hollowed out the valley and the plain;
He moulded bud, and bird, and fruit, and grain.
He wrote His love so on the world's far rim,
My heart lifts up in boundless love to Him.

God made the heavens—in the arching space;
He tossed the stars, a million, into place.
He made His canvas of the vaulted blue;

He fashioned worlds, and suns, and rainbow hue.
He painted glory on the world's far rim;
My heart goes out in wonderment to Him."

Jesus Christ was evidently a lover of the high places. We read that He often went up into the mountains where He could find intimate fellowship with His God and restoration for His soul. Our Scripture (Mark 9: 2–8) tells us of one of the richest of these experiences. I think that it would be well for us to imagine ourselves trail climbers with the Master and to study His experience as He saw life on that great day.

We notice, in the first place, that this sacred hour meant *a new appreciation of the values of tradition.* He talked with Elijah and Moses. You have often had similar experiences. Characters who have long ago passed from this earth have become so real to you that you have had conversations with them even when they were absent in body. The Master was by no means a grooved traditionalist, for He upset many established customs in His tremendous urge to exalt human values. Neither did He go to the other extreme, however, and defy every moral or religious custom just because it was old. One difficulty in youth is that we are likely to become enamoured of the freedom from slavery to staid custom without acquiring the appreciation which Jesus displayed of the values of the past. We become destructive, whereas Jesus was constructive. Jesus ruled out Moses' law of revenge; He did not share the intolerance with which Moses and Elijah regarded their enemies; He would not accept their advocacy of the death penalty for Sunday desecra-

tion; He did not place the high value on ritualistic sacrifices which Moses and his contemporaries insisted upon. Nevertheless, He did not try to overthrow everything which Moses had contributed to the thought of the world. Among these things were the sacredness of the marriage tie, the regard for human life, the importance of honesty, and the spirit of reverence toward God, His day, and His name.

It is perfectly true that builders must occasionally destroy old foundations, but their chief work, we should remember, is that of building. There are people, some in positions of power, who seem to operate exclusively with wrecking crews, leaving nothing but yawning basements and piled up refuse in their wake.

At a young people's conference not very long ago, an over confident iconoclast told his hearers that moral laws were based on "taboos" and needed a drastic revision. He thought the ideal matrimonial arrangement would be to consider both wife and husband at liberty to engage freely in relations with other "friends" whenever their inclinations called for it. We do not know how much damage this man did to his impressionable audience, but we do know that there is an exceedingly hazardous tendency toward premature sophistication in moral and spiritual matters.

Young people need to be told again that the fundamental moral laws are grounded not upon "taboos" but upon centuries of human experience. Lasting happiness comes only through the disciplining of instincts so that they serve to fortify rich and rewarding affections. So-called freedom is nothing but a quick road to horror and despair. Durant

Drake of Vassar, who is by no means a conservative, says, "The absence of moral standards is apt to be even more disastrous than loyalty to a narrow and repressive code." A wise architect has said, "You can break the laws of architectural art provided you master them first." It is true in every field. The only safe political progressive is he who knows the values of the past; the only serviceable economic radical is the man who knows the structure of our system and understands what it can do at its best; the only authentic music critic is he who is himself a musician; the only man in a position to interpret the Bible to modern times is he who is acquainted with its history and is sympathetic with its inner meaning.

If we first master the moral and spiritual ideals which are the fruit of the most satisfactory human experience, we shall discover values which we shall never wish to surrender. We shall then be glad that we did not try to improve on the moral codes of the ages before we had tested those codes in the crucible of practical life.

Another truth which was clearly in the mind of Jesus as He stood on the mountain top that day with His fellow trail-climbers, Peter, James, and John, is that *genuine religious faith cannot be insulated from the practical world.* Peter wanted to build three tents and live there, but Jesus hurried down the mountain side to help a man who was suffering from insanity. Possibly John Dewey had this incident in mind when he said, "An ideal school would be one in which ideal conditions for society would be taught and exemplified by the school itself." Here is a real challenge for educational trail-climb-

ers who look toward the heights of Christian experience and service.

In spite of the disappointments that are sure to come to the person who ventures out into the practical world, no virile individual would prefer to stay on the mountain top, as Peter suggested in his unthinking moment of wonderment. If we succeed in keeping aloof from the actualities of life, we are, says Niebuhr, like " the cute little altar boys who do their work deftly and artistically but have no idea that the drama which they are enacting is a tragedy." Our hope for moral cleansing is not in grandstand censorships by political demagogues, but in idealists, teachers, and others thrust into the practical world, who by their daily contacts literally determine the character of to-morrow's world. We need more teachers, who like the Master know something of mountain top experiences in which faith in God becomes the most realistic of personal convictions; more, who like the Master are unafraid to test sacred beliefs about God and man out in the fierce combat of the world.

In the transfiguration experience we see also a reflection of Jesus' discovery that *the ultimate values of life are spiritual.* The difference between a man who is at peace, who enjoys life, who is equally calm in days of defeat and in days of success, and a man who is exuberant only when life goes along like a song and who hovers frequently on the brink of self-destruction is that the former has discovered the ultimate values of life. The difference between a man who never grows up and the man who really matures is that the former does not plan his destination any more than does a log floating down a

river, while the latter sees an ideal in the distance toward which he constantly strives with thrilling expectancy. Men who are in a position to observe say that our age is stricken with almost unparalleled confusion just because people have no clear idea of what they want. There is a tendency to seek now pleasure, then excitement, or money, as the impulse arises. But the spirits of men are withered and blighted because they have not found the nourishment, that reality which satisfies them to the depths.

Our central problem, says Prof. Rufus M. Jones in *Fundamental Ends of Life,* is to discover some reality, good in itself, not for what returns it may bring, " but because it absolutely fits our deepest nature, as floating pollen fits the kindred flower or light the eye, and gives us the surging consciousness that we have found that for which we were mysteriously made."

" We have listened closely," suggests Reinhold Niebuhr in *Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic,* " to the promise, ' Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you,' but we have concentrated recently on the latter phrase, ' these things shall be added.' "

As a matter of fact our gaze is fastened so severely on the things that are to be added that we now have to squint to see the kingdom which we should seek. We are like the little shaggy dogs with hair in their eyes which would go blind if the hair were removed. We should be lost in utter darkness if deprived of secondary things. Solitary confinement to Paul met an opportunity for thought and prayer. If we were left alone, we should lose

our sanity in the attempt to get along without excitement and pleasure. Professor Jones says this age is in the position of a small boy trying to fit together a jig saw puzzle with the most important picture missing. Many churches, even, have despaired of attracting people by offering spiritual food. One church I know of is soon to have a Rally Day program with refreshments served at the morning service; one of our leading churches in Washington stages a moving picture every Sunday evening, using films identical with those shown in the theatre around the corner.

What do we mean by ultimate values? We mean values which are worth while in themselves. Instrumental values are houses, automobiles, radios, money, or airplanes. These things may be used to foster the ultimate or intrinsic values. Love, for instance, is an ultimate value. Friendship is worth while for its own sake. It may be prostituted for selfish ends, but then it ceases to be real friendship. When you are at your best, you want your wife's love not for any profit she may bring you, but because that love is an ultimate value. A beautiful painting or a perfect symphony is an ultimate value. When you have seen a perfect sunset, you have a value which no man can take from you. When you have heard a perfect composition, you have a joy which the world cannot take away. A character is the greatest ultimate value. It is simply futile to measure its worth in terms of dollars. Sometimes you have missed some one from your presence, and you have wondered why. He never gave you money, helped you with your work, or recommended you for a position. You discovered upon second thought

that he was of infinite worth for his character's sake. Philosophers seem to agree that the ultimate values are truth, goodness, and beauty. John speaks throughout his gospel of "life eternal" as the ultimate value, not simply immortal life, but the life of the spirit which begins right here and now.

If we can once grasp the meaning of life's ultimate values and see that herein is to be found the lasting satisfactions, we shall be able to enjoy ourselves even on teachers' salaries. We shall have the joy that comes to one who has found a supreme loyalty to which he can give his all. During the war many men said they had found themselves. What had happened? Life had become simple for them; it had lost its distractions. There was no longer any problem as to what they should do. There was only one thing possible for loyal men: to join the army and win the war. There were no bills to pay, no jobs to hunt, no question as to what should be worn, no confusion as to the right course to pursue. But after the war, the whole structure fell apart. These men had a loyalty which absorbed everything else, but it was not lasting. It steeped them in hatred, taught them to see only the weaknesses of the enemy, and to a degree brutalized them. But Christ offers us a loyalty which overarches every other loyalty in the human category. There is no happiness possible if we allow other loyalties to intervene. Family loyalty, national loyalty, vocational loyalty, party loyalty must all give way to one passion for the kingdom of God and His righteousness. To follow Him is to find ourselves regardless of any misfortunes that may follow. It gives the freedom that comes from a supreme affection, a freedom

from further anxiety because the problem of what to do is finally settled.

In our more sober moments we see the finality of this truth. We see men who have never known freedom from financial strain; we see men who have never won distinction or great worldly rewards; we see men who are even suffering from poor health, and yet who are rich with the treasure that is treasure indeed. They have climbed all these years up the mountainside with their Master. They have enviable control; they have refinement of spirit; they have a faith that never wavers; they have a silent strength of soul which we instantly recognize as of eternal value. Hundreds of multi-millionaires would surrender all their stocks and bonds, houses and lands for that one possession—a character that has won the day, a personality that is satisfaction itself.

These things Christ saw from the mountain top, —the values in tradition, the fact that religion cannot be insulated from practical life, the verity that the ultimate values of life belong to the realm of the spirit. Is it any wonder that the disciples heard a voice out of the cloud saying, " This is my beloved Son, hear ye him " ?

XI

THE COURAGE OF THE MASTER

THIEF, liar, and coward are three words in the English language which penetrate the heart and strike dismay to any who hear them, according to Dr. Charles E. Jefferson. The sad part of it is that men whom the world regards as cowards are often brave, whereas men whom the world rates as courageous are often cowardly.

A nineteen-year-old English lad enlisted in the volunteer forces of Great Britain in the early period of the World War. He had just been married to a girl whom he had loved passionately for more than a year. While at the front a year later, he received word that he was the father of a baby boy, who was to be named for him. He could not stand the pain of separation any longer. He must secure a furlough, travel back to his little home near Liverpool, kiss his beloved wife once more, and enjoy the rapture of holding in his arms his own little son. He applied for a leave, but was told that no furloughs were granted. England needed every man at the front. He fought for three more days, and then decided that death would be better than the terrible anxiety of not knowing how his wife was getting along, coupled with the agonizing torture of not having the privilege of seeing his own offspring. He resolved to take a furlough on his own initiative and return in a week or less to his regiment. He succeeded in getting through the lines, crossing the

Channel on a freighter, and finally arriving in his native village and home to his family. Military authorities soon discovered his whereabouts; he was promptly returned to France, court-martialed, and shot as a deserter. The world condemned him as a coward. As a matter of fact, he was as brave as any man on the English front. He had volunteered far ahead of men much his senior in age. He was a brave youth whose deep emotional nature led him into injudicious action, and finally to a disgraceful death.

On the other hand, a certain sergeant was decorated with the Distinguished Service Medal by recommendation of General Pershing. He testified later that he did not feel any honour in receiving the decoration, for he had loathed life long before the war, and had enlisted with a definite purpose of performing reckless feats at the front which would lead him to certain death. He finally faced a whole battery of machine-gun fire, and in bold sight of the enemy walked out to " no man's land " to bring in a wounded comrade. He received eighteen machine-gun wounds, but was saved from death by expert treatment at a base hospital. He was a coward, afraid to live and face the consequences of a sinful life. But the world acclaimed him as one of the bravest men in the front-line trenches.

When we attempt to assess the courage of the Master, we find that He was not lacking in physical valour. At the trial before Pilate, Jesus was accused of placing His authority over that of the king. Pilate asked him, " Art thou the King of the Jews? " Jesus answered, " Thou hast said it." Jesus would not equivocate. The cause of spiritual authority

was at stake. His courage was far superior to that of Napoleon, or Washington, or Alexander the Great, or Xerxes, or Cæsar, or Horatius. These men were propelled by the *esprit de corps* of their armies. Thousands of fellow citizens were waiting to acclaim their fortitude. Jesus stood alone—alone with His God and the peace of His own soul.

But the courage that we want to analyze in the Master is of a higher order than that which is displayed in an army or before a Pilate. We submit that it took much more courage for Jesus to live His life than to die His death. When there is no dramatic situation to challenge one; when there is constant pressure of comfort and congeniality to tempt toward compromise; then it takes fearlessness and resolution of a far different order from that which is necessary in an emergency. Moral courage is as far beyond physical courage as physical dauntlessness is beyond cowardice. It is moral courage that Jesus possessed to a marvelous degree.

His moral courage, we find, first of all expressed itself in facing friends. Jesus prized friendship as much as any of us do. During His ministry He doubtless met several rabbis whom He recognized from boyhood days, probably some of whom had heard Him discoursing in the temple at the age of twelve. He loved the temple in Jerusalem where He had been brought as a babe to be consecrated to Jehovah. Nevertheless, He saw the lifelessness, the hypocrisy, the uselessness of the temple worship as it was conducted, and one day He declared, though reluctantly, that not one stone should be left upon another.

Jesus had the same desire to establish contact with

the leading spirits of the time that we have. In Jesus' day it was the scribes and Pharisees who sat on Moses' seat, which was an emblem of spiritual authority. But Jesus saw through their false living and their insincerity, and was forced in the interests of truth to say, "Do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not."

A dominant need for courage to-day is in the facing of our own friends whom we have known for years. We see their kindness, their humanity, their helpfulness, and we covet them for church membership. They tell us that they are not good enough; that there are certain things which they believe to be wrong which they are not willing to surrender. Our impulse is to let down the bars and say, "Just sign on the dotted line, and join the church." But where is our Christianity going to-day if we are not ready to stand for integrity?

It is clear, also, that Jesus' moral courage was demonstrated in His facing of fortunes. The love of money was as strong in His day as in ours. Rich people carried dignity and prestige with them, and it was a mark of sociability to keep company with them on good terms, just as it is to-day. It took as much courage to face those of affluence then as now, and yet Jesus had the courage to tell some simple, penetrating truths to a young man who came asking, "What shall I do to enter eternal life?"

The presence of great wealth in America presents a challenge to all who follow in the footsteps of such a Lord in these days. Our national wealth is four hundred twenty-five billion dollars. This is forty-five *per centum* of all the wealth in the world. Shall we ignore the question of riches and be con-

tent to solicit financiers for contributions to worthy causes? It is the duty of the church to find out why two *per centum* of the population owns sixty *per centum* of our wealth. Does some of this money rightfully belong to customers who have been charged exorbitant prices for goods? Does it rightfully belong to people who have paid excessive rents? Does part of it properly belong to millions of toilers who have produced it?

It is our duty to remind the world that the kingdom of God cannot be ushered in to the tune of the cash register. The kingdom of God cannot be built with million-dollar checks unless they represent genuineness of character. There can be no fruit for Christ's kingdom unless folk are filled with the spirit of God way down deep in their souls. Materialistic minds cannot bring forth spiritual harvests, no matter how generous the endowments that are provided. We need the courage of the Master in facing the fortunes of our day.

But the courage of Jesus reached its maximum in facing the failures of His career. One day, after a repast, Jesus preached a sermon in which He treated the deepest problems of His mission. He brought forth the stirring challenge of discipleship. It was not to be a passive signature to a roll-call. It was to mean the giving of flesh and blood. Before He had even approached His climax, some one murmured, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" From that time many of the disciples "went back and walked no more with him." The original crowd of five thousand which Jesus had just fed with bread and fish dwindled to four thousand, then to three thousand, then to two thousand, to one thousand,

and after a while to five hundred, and three hundred, and one hundred. Soon there were only eleven left, for even Judas had betrayed Him. Next the three disciples could not watch with Him one hour in Gethsemane and fled when the soldiers came for their Lord. Then Peter denied Him. Did He decide to level off the hard places in His messages and to give them what they wanted? That has always been the temptation of the church.

Jesus preferred to fail as the world counted failure. He placed all His hope in planting the seed of the word, which was to germinate in the lives of men and possess them until the world should ultimately be under the control of His divine spirit. He believed in the final conquest of ideas, and His idea was the mastery of love, self-sacrifice, forgiveness, and trust in the heavenly Father. To-day the world, when it looks at Christ, says Jefferson, does not exclaim, "Behold the statesman or the general or the poet." It says, "Behold the Man." Other men have been great generals, statesmen, writers, and musicians, but they failed in the greatest achievement. They failed to be men. Jesus was content to accept the cross, the emblem of shame, rather than retreat from His high standard and His lofty spirit. His failure was like the failure of salt. It evaporates in the process of preserving foods. It gives itself to save its surroundings.

It takes courage to accept what the world calls failure in the pursuit of an ideal. But this is the failure of the cross. It is the failure of which Christ spoke when He said, "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

XII

CAN WE ESTABLISH THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

WE often pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth" without the slightest conception of the vast meaning of those words. Many people recite that prayer in all sincerity, not knowing that in many of life's relationships they would be the first to fight against its fulfilment. We actually pray for the rule of a Christlike God in all the affairs of the world. When we join in the Lord's Prayer, we become arch-radicals. We propose changes in human society which would be nothing less than revolutionary, although we should probably favour the evolutionary method of achieving the necessary progress.

When the overwhelming majority of individuals discovers the joy of living a God-centered life, and when all mankind becomes a mammoth fraternity, then the kingdom of God will have come on earth. We are making gains in that direction, but no well informed person would say that we have arrived at the goal. A visitor from the new planet, studying our human relationships, would hardly call us a world-wide family. In only few cases have we attained anything like international, inter-racial, inter-class, economic, or ecclesiastical fraternity. If the problem seems too stupendous for us to consider, we can at least begin where certain goals are within our

reach. The kingdom of God has already come with certain individuals. There have been some persons in every generation since Jesus Christ who have demonstrated what we mean by a God-centered life. In all their relationships they have allowed God's law of love to guide their actions.

"The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit," says Paul. Does it seem Utopian to look out upon the present world and expect righteousness ever to triumph over selfishness and greed and lust? We, at least, can begin where we are and can bring in such a kingdom in our own sphere. Whatever our situation to-day, it is not so difficult as it was in the time of Jesus. The Master set out to teach international fraternity, regard for men, whether they were Samaritans or Romans, at a time when the Jews had every reason to detest the Romans for their oppression. He said of a centurion, "I have never seen such faith; no, not in Israel." That was equivalent to the New Hampshire Baptist minister, who, in the midst of the war preached a sermon urging his people to maintain only a Christian spirit of love and human understanding toward the Germans. The minister, of course, was given a jail sentence, for it was an atrocious thing during the war to preach Christianity in its full implications. Yet this man, like his Lord, did what we can do. We can pay the cost and start to organize the kingdom of God in our own borders.

When Jesus was twelve years of age, a man named Judas of Galilee led a violent revolt against Rome with the result that Sepphoris was burned to the ground and its inhabitants sold into slavery. Two thousand Jewish patriots were crucified. Taxes

were imposed on everything the Jews used. There was a water tax, a meat tax, a salt tax, a road tax, a house tax, a city tax. The publicans, or tax collectors, came to be known as grafters. It is said that during the Roman rule between 63 B. C. and 70 A. D. the Jews never paid less than thirty *per centum* of their income for taxes. Hardly a year passed by without at least one insurrection or riot against Roman rule. Yet, in face of this intense anti-Roman feeling, Jesus dared to preach His gospel of invincible good will. He never lost His faith in the gospel which He preached. He never, despite all provocations, stooped to the advocacy of barbarous force to deliver His people.

Perhaps we look at our religious prejudices and are tempted to say that nothing can ever be done about them. It seems that every group is convinced of its own superiority and will never surrender to another. Jesus had as difficult a situation to face when He became known as an ecclesiastical radical. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. There was no question in the minds of the Jews concerning their favour in the eyes of God. Yet Jesus did what He could, setting up the kingdom in His own circle, breaking down those icy walls that divided religious groups. We can start on such a simple basis, not hoping to bring in the kingdom throughout the world in our first day's effort. Normal students in this town have been experimenting in this particular field, going in groups to different churches in order to broaden their outlook and intensify their friendship and religious sympathy with one another.

As we view the economic injustices of our time,

we should not dare to say that the world is Christian in that regard. In a family one member is not allowed to starve while another feasts. Here again Jesus began on an individual basis. He could not reconstruct the world at once, but He could urge the wealthy who came to Him to sell what they had and give it to the poor. He could do what was within His power to relieve distress. He could glorify the widow who brought her mite and upon whom others looked with haughty superiority. Today, we can do very specific things to bring in the kingdom in this regard. Here are millions of Chinese starving to death. Millions have already died. Photographs are sent of little children in the last throes of agony, some sold for food, others slowly dying. We can either do nothing about it, or we can give all within our means, even if we have to deny ourselves something, in order that we may be Christian toward these fellow men.

Jesus also initiated the kingdom in social fraternity; that is, by associating with social groups ordinarily excluded from good society. He tried to see the hypocrisy in the current method of treating prostitutes. He had an idea that the men who judged so harshly could hardly afford to censor severely the women of ill repute. He even took the part of one who was about to be stoned to death. Likewise, He ate with sinners and publicans, thus scandalizing His people. It was as if a prominent member of respectable society in our time should go down the street arm in arm with convicted outlaws. It was as offensive as it would be in the South for a white man to live on social equality with a Negro. But in Jesus' immediate sphere of influence, He was

determined that the kingdom of God should be established as far as Christian relations between human beings were concerned!

What do you do within the limits of your responsibility? Do you realize that there are certain people who will respond to almost anything you propose? Do you, young woman, know that if your lover is sincere in his affection, he will do almost anything to win your admiration? Set for him the highest moral and spiritual standard, and you will marvel at his response to your ideal. Likewise, many business men and church men are waiting for associates who will make a plunge toward a higher standard of unselfish service. Make the venture, and you will be surprised at your following! You may inaugurate the kingdom of God in your life, in your home, in your vocation, in your church. The kingdom of God is within you!

"The kingdom of God is peace." We know by this time that the world is built for coöperation. War is an international suicide pact. Race wars, industrial wars, church wars do both sides more harm than good. Though good sound arguments are often in place, nevertheless we can maintain a respect toward those with whom we differ. We can understand their backgrounds and stand steadfastly at our positions at the same time. We can all win for ourselves an inner peace in the midst of panic. Inner conflicts come when we are not sure that we are right. Jesus was forever at peace because He would let no temporary gain intercept His perfect accord with God. He calmly turned away applicants who were apparently not whole hearted in their pledges of allegiance. Luther forgave the bigamy

of Phillip of Hesse because he needed his enormous influence in the reformation. But Jesus had won His battles with such temptations long before He started His ministry. It is true that He had His struggle in Gethsemane, but this was a struggle to understand the will of God, not a struggle with the problem of obedience.

The value of an intensive study of the life of Christ is that we discover Him to have attained His moral and spiritual splendour through resources that are open to all of us. It will not help us to see that Christ illustrated the kingdom of God within an individual if we think of Him as a strange deity from another world, possessing powers far beyond our reach. Rettelmeyer in *Behold the Man* explains that "for once in the history of mankind the Will Universal found the door wide open by which to enter in its full purity into a human being." To him the life of Christ was that of a personality "coming forth to manifest itself like the sun at dawn from its hidden resources below the horizon." Both His thinking and His life were "photographs of the divine mind dwelling in Him, which also lived for Him in everything else." The important thing to remember here is that God may be as real to us as He was to Christ if we seek as earnestly to do His will and to know His presence. How do I know? From some experiences of my own and from some very memorable observations. A number of people whom I have known come to my mind. I have heard them tell how God has seen them through their fiery trials. What would otherwise have been a dull and gray existence was turned into a life of brilliance and rainbow beauty by the sacred

light that shone through their many coloured experiences.

"The kingdom of God is joy in the Holy Spirit," says our text. We look for the time when there will be more joy on earth than there is now. One day I was somewhat overcome as I noticed the faces of people on Washington Street, Boston. I had to wait ten minutes to meet some one on a busy corner. I became tired of reading my newspaper and began to read human faces. Only once in a long while did I see a face that seemed to tell a story of inward joy. There were tired faces, worried faces, nervous faces, unpleasant faces, hard faces, foolish faces, thoughtless faces, but once in a while I saw a man or woman who seemed to have found the secret of inward joy. Just what is the need of the average person who lacks the outlook on life and the inner possessions necessary to enjoy his existence?

What was Christ's secret? He was not One who simply believed in God. He seemed to feel the lift of the tide of God's being in all that He said and did. It was not stuffy ritual. It was that free enjoyment of the life of God which comes flowing like a full tide into every soul that is open to it. When Jesus thought of God, He felt in His soul the surge of life that "rolls through all things." Somewhere alone with God on the beautiful hills of Galilee, Jesus learned the mystery which is God, for, as Rettelmeyer states it, "He had removed the last layer of self to receive the life that sank into His soul."

You can enjoy that same intimate relationship with God which Jesus enjoyed as He committed Himself unreservedly to His will. The great ques-

tion is: Are you ready to remove that "last layer of self"? If so, you can have His fortitude to carry the cross, His power to fight for truth, to defend the oppressed, to prevail over the cheap, the selfish, the fleshly impulses of life. You can participate in the romance of building the kingdom of God! Make God the quest of your life. Induce your friend to take the step forward and become an active Christian. Open a crusade in your own personal territory, a crusade with no less a goal than the kingdom of God, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit!

XIII

A LABOUR DAY REVIVAL MEETING

A PARABLE OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDUSTRY

A STRIKE had been in progress more than a month in one of the more prominent eastern cities of the United States. No hope of settlement appeared on the horizon. There was a deadlock, all appeals for arbitration from state authorities or from private citizens being answered only by volleys of abuse from both sides. The employes claimed that the employer was making huge profits, and that the wage cut was sheer brutality. The employer alleged that the employes did not try to understand his position, and blindly demanded war time wages that were so high they made competition impossible. Most of the disinterested observers thought that the wages were insufferable before the cut. They disapproved of the manner in which the cut was made, with no attempt to explain anything to the workers and with only a blunt announcement that it would soon be effective. They were sympathetic with the strikers until they broke forth into violence in the third week of the industrial war.

The dull monotony of the workless days was broken by multi-coloured posters announcing the arrival of an evangelist. Coincidentally, the revival campaign was to open on Labour Sunday. The

strikers longed for the meeting, for they pictured a brass band, a high-powered, semi-ridiculous, hair-raising speaker, and plenty of "fireworks" to help them endure their drawn out battle for a living wage.

The tabernacle was packed the first night. Everything that goes with a regulation revival meeting was on hand. A brass band played dozens of familiar gospel tunes as the people streamed down the aisles and into their seats. They were "gospel songs," which, though they do not pass muster with music critics, do somehow release the pent up feelings of the multitudes. Veterans of old-fashioned camp meetings could recognize: "Nothing but the Blood of Jesus," "Softly and Tenderly," "Wonderful Words of Life," "Throw Out the Life Line," "Rescue the Perishing," and "Shall We Gather at the River?"

Capitalist and Labour Leader Attend

There was no end of curious whisperings in the cosmopolitan crowd that waited patiently for the speaker to emerge with his troop of singers on to the stage. Quickened interest was evident when the prominent Mr. Robert Holt Henderson, president of the Amalgamated Textile Company, whose men were out on strike, appeared with aloof air, and found a row of folding chairs vacant near the rear. A wave of snickerings here, and friendly nods there, could be noticed when Reverend James Raymond Caswell of the First Avenue Congregational Church seated himself near the front. Scores of people looked surprised when John Roskote, the president of the labour union, sulky looking and

carelessly dressed, strolled in and sat with a small group of his own followers.

Soon the song leader, known far and wide as "Pep Wilkins," appeared from a side entrance in white trousers and shirt sleeves. For twenty minutes he led the people in gospel singing accompanied by the band. He had a bag full of tricks which seemed inexhaustible. He tried antiphonal singing, the men singing a clause, "Standing on the promises of Christ my King," and the women coming back with "Through eternal ages let His praises ring." The atmosphere became tense when he said, "This time the strikers present will sing the first stanza, and all others will sing the second." So the strikers sang, "More about Jesus would I know, More of His grace to others show," whereupon "the others" sang, "More about Jesus let me learn, more of His holy will discern." Few were the eyes that did not turn back to see if Mr. Henderson was singing. Sure enough, he had been caught in the whirlwind, and was singing with as much gusto as the leader himself, "Spirit of God my teacher be, Showing the things of Christ to me."

In another minute the local Methodist minister, noted throughout the district for his intense interest in personal evangelism as well as for his undisguised sympathy with the workers, appeared from the side entrance, and behind the clergyman walked the evangelist. He looked so much like his pictures in the window cards that everybody recognized him—weather-beaten face indicating that he had not lived in clover all his days, a very human smile, a pompadour of curly black hair, big, friendly, penetrating eyes, a muscular frame.

Enter the Evangelist

The Methodist minister introduced him as "Rev. Amos R. Wrightington, who has come to help us find the Lord again." It was not long until the preacher had read the first fourteen verses of the third chapter of Luke and announced as his text, "Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance."

It was soon clear that he was not the high-powered, semi-ridiculous, hair-raising melodramatist whom some people had expected. He did not try to be funny, but held the people's attention by something like a white-hot fire in his soul. Hundreds who came to see "a show" were immediately captured by an intense magnetism and a keen human sympathy born of wide experience in the actual rough and tumble of the average man's world. The local situation had not been lost on him. He was evidently no ecclesiastical politician, for his "shots" began to hit conspicuous targets. They were not insults, however, but earnest challenges to honest repentance, which demolished every man's defensive mechanisms.

Though he did not know the individuals personally, the speaker seemed to sense who were the employers, and, looking several of them directly in the eye, he brought them face to face with the personal application of that third chapter of Luke which he had read with such peculiar emphasis.

"The Lord is speaking to you employers," he said, "when John the Baptist says, 'Extort no more than that which is appointed you.' Your souls will never be saved until you repent. I do not care how

many churches you support; neither does God, unless you are right with your fellow men. Some of you are hard-hearted, grasping, inhuman to your employes. You are self-satisfied as you live in your luxury while many of your workers struggle along on fifteen dollars a week. You know, or ought to know, that many of your men cannot engage doctors for their families, cannot buy milk for their babies. Their family life is destroyed by the employment of the mother and some of the children. You dismiss them from your minds with the comforting thought that you are in a better position because you are worth more to the community, and that your men are getting just what they are worth."

No Impossible Idealism

At this point the evangelist showed strong emotion, as evangelists are wont to do. He was talking about families in grief over children that had died from undernourishment, of fathers broken-hearted because of the death of mothers who could not stand the strain of factory duties and household tasks combined. He brought tears to all eyes, not excepting those of Mr. Henderson. He convinced his hearers that his message was not a mere outburst of impossible idealism, for he mentioned many firms which had abolished strikes by adopting another principle in industrial relations. He mentioned shop representation, profit-sharing, and joint management as the ideal, but said that the method was not the important thing. "The first thing," he said, "is to acknowledge employes as partners in the business rather than as means to some economic end."

He turned then toward the groups of men and

women who were evidently employes. They, too, must repent, he declared. They, too, were bitter, often very selfish, class-conscious, and unsportsmanlike. Addressing the labour leaders, he said: "You should lead your men to accept for themselves the highest standard of workmanship. You should inspire them with the thought that they are servants of the public, even as is the doctor, the teacher, or the minister. You should tell them that poor families can buy their products only if they produce them most efficiently. You should instil into your men a desire to understand the problems of the employers. Why do you rail at the church because it does not always take your side in the industrial battle? The church is your best friend even when it deplores your methods. It is your duty to spiritualize the labour movement so that its motives are more unselfish, less materialistic, and thus more Christian. Fight for decent wages, good housing, hygienic working conditions, fair hours, and adequate protection—yes, but choose only those weapons which are furnished by education, understanding, and integrity, for only these in the end will win the respect of the public and bring you lasting victories."

Here the preacher pictured workers as having too often won their higher wages at the price of ruthless and thoughtless strikes. He let them see what it means to gain the whole world and lose their own souls. He approved their aims as justifiable on the ground that adequate material support is necessary to spiritual vitality. But he also made them feel that there were higher considerations which had not been faced by labour leaders. He let them see the Golden Rule in a new light.

Preaching to the Preachers

There were twenty or more clergymen present. The evangelist turned to them. They had all attended revivals before and knew that professional revivalists had a way of haranguing ministers. But after hearing the powerful attack on the employers and workers, they knew that Mr. Wrightington would not let them off with a mere bit of play-acting.

"What have you preachers done about this strike?" he demanded. "Did you do anything to prevent it? Did you not know that industrial ethics is as important a matter as domestic or political or ecclesiastical ethics? Did you realize that a situation involving the daily welfare and happiness of thousands of your fellow townsmen is no less your concern because it means delving into business or industry? Were you afraid to touch on the subject because of the presence of men who are financially interested? Did you consider that the 'whole gospel' includes a man's spirit and practice in his every day vocation? Did you ever take the trouble to inform yourselves concerning working conditions in the factories? Did you ever make any effort to attend labour meetings or to establish a working relationship between the church and the factions now at war with one another? Did you preach sermons that admitted employers or employes to the privileges of salvation while their industrial ethics remained unsanctified, in fact pagan? Have you been as much interested in reconciling these conflicting groups as you would have been in harmonizing church divisions? God help you if you have not done your duty. May God forgive you and lead you

now to consecrate yourselves to this mighty task as fully as you were ever consecrated to the cause of a sober America, or a warless world, or a converted India."

The preachers were visibly moved. New light had dawned upon them. They had not been consciously guilty of neglect in every case, for some had not been trained to see moral implications in the industrial field. A few were guilty of allowing tact to blend into cowardice. The resentment, often felt against evangelists who excoriate clergymen, was not in their hearts. They looked at the prophet through moistened eyes that testified to their penitence and their conversion.

Fruits Meet for Repentance

"Just as I am Without One Plea" was sung by the congregation, the last stanza softly without accompaniment. The scene that followed seemed impossible to those who looked on with exceptional self-control. The altar was soon filled with penitents. Many who stayed behind were astonished at the sight. For among the men who knelt before the evangelist were Rev. Mr. Caswell, Mr. Roskote, and Mr. Henderson. After the evangelist had shaken hands with them all and had prayed for their souls, he asked them to give brief testimonies. Men who were not accustomed to speaking seemed to be under the mighty power of a new experience. Not the least surprising was Mr. Roskote.

A New Friendliness

Few people noticed Mr. Roskote's soft shirt and collar, badly adjusted tie, well-worn and blackened

cap, unpressed trousers, and unshined shoes, as he rose to speak. "I have scoffed at the name and the spirit of Jesus," he began. "I have taught black hatred against the bosses. I have urged revenge instead of understanding and forgiveness. I asked God for His forgiveness and want to do the right thing after this." He then looked at Mr. Henderson with a friendly expression and said, "As far as I am concerned, there is no hatred in my heart toward the bosses. Christ has taken bitterness away from me to-night, and I hope it never comes back." He then found a seat with his fellow workers, being received with more cordiality than would be expected from men who might easily think they had lost a champion.

Rev. Mr. Caswell was the next man to speak. He was a handsome figure. Straight as an arrow and more than six feet tall, he had the appearance of an ambassador. He wore a wing collar which gave ample exhibition of a five-dollar silk necktie. His rimless glasses and heavy eyebrows, as well as his high forehead and thoughtful eyes, set him off as a scholar. His braid-trimmed cutaway coat, patent leather shoes, and spotless white shirt contributed to the appearance of a well-groomed and prosperous clergyman who was not suffering the pangs of hunger as he laboured in the vineyard of the Lord. "I am guilty," were his first words. Some of his parishioners opened their mouths in ghastly surprise as he continued: "I have dodged this whole thing like a coward. I have tolerated monstrous injustices. My goal has been institutional success rather than Christian integrity. I have been a private chaplain to a few employers and their families rather than a

fearless prophet of the whole gospel of Jesus Christ. God has used Brother Wrightington this evening to touch my unworthy soul. I am happy with a new relationship to my heavenly Father. Before this altar I have consecrated myself to this larger conception of human brotherhood. Friends, pray that I may be steadfast."

The Boss is Converted

Mr. Henderson visibly trembled with feeling as he began, hesitatingly, to testify. Medium sized, slight of stature, with a tired, worried face, and small, calculating eyes, he was the picture of a typical worn-out American business man. "I have been a member of the church for fifty years," he said, "but to-night for the first time I feel that God has awakened my soul. I have been hard-hearted and unsympathetic toward my employes. When I talk to my friends about them, I refer to them as 'bums,' 'hunkies,' or 'rummies.' I often relish my control over them and take advantage of their poverty to show them who is boss. I have had only one concern; namely, to satisfy the stockholders. I have never exerted the slightest energy to give my workers any more privileges than were absolutely necessary to keep them working. To me they have been machines. I have been guilty of the worst sin—the use of human beings as means to my own selfish ends. I confess that my own soul has been shrunken by denying to myself the privilege of fellowship with these brother men whom I now see as children of God. The Lord helping me, I shall for the first time in thirty years of business experience let Jesus Christ come into my factory."

Mr. Henderson seemed lost in ecstasy as he closed his testimony. He walked down the aisle to where Mr. Roskote was sitting. The labour leader stood up, and the two men shook hands, their greeting giving every indication of sincerity. Then Mr. Henderson sat down next to Mr. Roskote with his right arm around the back of his new friend's chair.

The evangelist said, " Let us pray," and with fervent tones led the people in an earnest supplication to the God of all humanity. He asked for strength to come to the preacher, the labour leader, and the employer, for he knew that hard days of testing were ahead. He prayed for further victories in all places where men struggle for gold, trampling upon the bodies and souls of their fellows in the mad scramble. He pleaded for the triumph of the spirit of Christlike brotherhood. He prayed for " entire sanctification " that should include all the affairs of men in the scope of Christ's dominion, and power, and glory. Men's hearts were strangely warmed. The power of God had broken in upon this disturbed area of the industrial world. Those who were present bear witness to the fact that in that dramatic hour the spirit of pentecost was born again.

XIV

MEN OF LIKE FEELING

"CONSCIOUSNESS OF KIND" is a principle which sociologists of the F. H. Giddings school use to explain the source of sympathy between the creatures of the world. It seems worthy of amplification and should be commissioned to serve the cause of international peace. The burden of the argument is that sympathy between living organisms comes from a consciousness of kind. Our sympathy with another creature widens and deepens according to the number and kind of similarities that we find between it and us. For instance, we never think very seriously of stepping on a worm on the sidewalk. We are crushing out life; we are breaking up some family in the insect world; we are causing pain, but there is almost no effect on our consciences. That is because we do not feel any consciousness of kind. We have not much in common with the worm; hence we can hardly imagine how he lives and how he feels.

But when we go higher in the animal scale, we find our sympathies growing as characteristics resemble ours more and more. If any one should entice a dog to swallow a fish hook and then with it pull him ashore, he would be arrested for cruelty to animals. The dog has more intelligence that we can recognize, and his audible objections are quite human at times. Laying all jesting aside, there is a great conscious-

ness of kind between man and ape. Their bodies are similarly constructed; both have intelligence; and both give evidence of sensitivity to impositions which are almost alike in expression. To treat an ape as we do a lobster—boil him alive—or as we do a worm—step on him—would bring forth a never-ending fire of public wrath.

Leaving the lower animal world and confining our deliberations to the relationships of human beings, we may still apply the principle. The stronger the consciousness of kind, the stronger the sympathy, and the less a likelihood of war. Here we may note another part of Giddings' theory; namely, the characteristics which we admire are the ones that draw us together. Features that we despise in ourselves never form a bond of friendship with others. If we place a high appraisal on the particular kind of automobile that we drive, it will form a certain bond of common interest with any other driver we may meet who owns the same make of car. The same holds true regarding those we meet from our home state; or those who live in our section of the city; or those who practice our professions; or those who are members of our fraternity; or those of our own nationality; or those of our own family tree. We hope to point out that if we would extend this theory to cover the whole world of humanity, we should make long strides ahead toward the time when wars shall cease.

Echo of Belleau Wood

We realize that the operation will not be unaccompanied by pain. Neither will it be unopposed by protests. Paul did not win any Jewish votes when

he told the Athenians: "He made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth"; or when he preached to the Ephesians in this fashion: "There is one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all"; or when he wrote to the Romans: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call unto him"; or when he became eloquent in his speech to the Colossians and wrote: "There cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, but Christ is all and in all." Amos, also, was a poor politician when he asked the Jews centuries before this: "Are we not as the Ethiopians?" Neither will Americans accept the doctrine of the "consciousness of kind" without the pains always common to growing spirits.

Nevertheless, we are convinced. A "buddy" from the U. S. Marine corps relates how in the Belleau Wood drive he with two others captured five Germans. It was a "no-prisoner day" from the nature of the campaign, and they faced the duty of murdering the men in cold blood. Before the deed was done, however, they ascertained that of these five, one was a carpenter, who had a wife and two children. It was likewise with one of the marines. The second German was a farmer, who had a wife and son at home. It was likewise with another of the marines. The third German had been a mechanic and was unmarried. It was likewise with a third marine. The "buddy" said: "I thought I was hard-boiled and could do anything, but that absolutely turned my stomach." The consciousness of kind made him swear that he would

never wear a "murderer's jacket" again for any flag or for any freedom.

Enemies Face to Face

The writer, begging pardon for personal reference, remembers how, after two weeks on the rifle range, he qualified as a "sharp shooter," and how, with stories of German atrocities in his credulous mind, he literally craved for a "crack" at the "boche," saying to a companion: "I made two hundred thirty-nine out of a possible three hundred. Wouldn't it be great stuff if we could get the Huns like that?"

But one day the writer stepped into a home in Solingen, Germany. There was a little girl in the family named Margrete. She was blue-eyed and fair. A sister at home with the same name resembled her. But Margrete Hann's limbs were crooked, and she was thin and stunted. The mother explained, upon inquiry, that during the terrible hunger blockade, especially during the winter of 1916–1917, before Russia broke down, they had had practically nothing but cow beets as their diet. Such fare had softened the bones of the growing child, and she was maimed for life. The French occupation was even then very severe, and their present rations of black bread, cocoa, and a few vegetables, with milk at famine prices had not improved the situation very much. There was a twenty-five-year-old son who told how he had been sent forth, like Americans, to fight for "freedom." Crippled Margrete, the soldier who had fought for an illusion, and the family that seemed so much like the average American family had done the work. The consciousness

of kind dawned, and another veteran said to himself, " Never again."

At the International Fellowship Convention, which met at Nyborg, Denmark, during the summer of 1923, we noticed the amazing spectacle of French and German delegates fraternizing and discovering to their own astonishment their common ambitions, common ideals, and common hopes. There were Russians present, among them Bulgakoff, once private secretary to Tolstoy. No one of them would have identified himself in the pictures of " bolsheviks " commonly displayed in American newspapers, and to the surprise of all, the German delegates were not horned or blood-soaked or lust-maddened, as they had been cartooned. Delegates from many lands went home from this merger of human aspirations and this discovery of human brotherhood determined that as for them " It shall never be again."

How Shall We Compete?

Let it not be imagined that we regard the problem of war as simple. We must all recognize sooner or later that the root cause of war is economic. Most of our leading economists agree to this premise. It is Dr. Edward Van Dyke Robinson who points out that the constant increase in population and decrease in food supply leave four plans open to any group of people: birth control, migration, lowered standards of living, or commercial conquest. Human nature militates against a lowered standard of living, and the instinct to perpetuate the race is too strong to be repelled with a single gesture. Migrations and commercial conquests remain as the

most probable alternatives. Here is the seed of war. No program aiming at the elimination of the passion for achievement and progress will avail.

We contend, then, that the issue is whether the struggle for markets and property shall be waged as a clean fight or as foul play. By a clean fight, we mean the winning of markets by the production of superior quality in goods sold, and by the rendering of superior service in the distribution of those goods. By foul play, we mean the destruction of competitors by the use of gas bombs, bayonets, big Berthas, and light rays, or any other methods of murder dignified by the name of "war."

As the coach of a well-known football team in the Northwest often said: "Hard fighting is never inconsistent with clean sportsmanship." We noticed that the "scrub team" never had any desire to twist an ankle or sprain a knee or wrench a neck when playing the first team of the college squad. There was the consciousness of kind that made "dirty work" unthinkable and that left the selection of "stars" to the survival of the fittest idea. Endurance tests, faithfulness in practice, knowledge of technique of football playing, alertness, and expertness determined the victories in these encounters. But when another team came over the mountains for an intercollegiate game, the consciousness of kind was not so strong, and players were often eliminated not by superior skill of opponents but by foul play. But the better the acquaintanceship, the less was the likelihood of such barbarism's being practiced. Now if consciousness of kind could civilize college football tactics, why should it not revolutionize our international relationships?

Conference and Education

Our program for international peace, therefore, will include all the international conferences, especially of youth, that it is humanly possible to organize. It will also involve a vigorous educational campaign to exalt before the rising generation the qualities in other peoples that contribute to the consciousness of kind. To mention a few as examples: are the Italians "dagoes"? What would we have lost without Savonarola, Angelo, Raphael, or Columbus? Are the Germans barbarians? Where would theology be without the contributions of Schleiermacher, Schopenhauer, Kant, Troeltsch, or Otto? Are the Jews "Sheeneys"? What should we be without the prophet of the moral law, Amos? And what would Christianity be without Paul, the organizer of the kingdom? And then, there is One before whom the world falls in adoration and says with Peter: "My Lord and my God!"

When Paul tried to ward off the people of Lystra because they would worship him as a god, he said: "We also are men of like feelings with you." This feeling on his part was no doubt a major influence in his outstanding success as a campaigner for Christianity. Outlawry of war, the world court, the league of nations, are factors for international peace. But we shall let the experts unravel such enigmas. In the meantime, churches, schools, theatres, the press may join in a crusade to create a consciousness of kind that will blast prejudices and hates and substitute the attitude of those who can say to all colours and all nationalities: "We also are men of like feelings with you."

XV

THE NEW PATRIOTISM

WE have all experienced a deep desire for an opportunity to perform a patriotic deed. Usually such patriotism has been conceived in the form of military service. Our history books, our monuments, our parades, have impressed us with the thought that to offer our services to the country in time of war is the outstanding patriotic act. Now there is not the slightest doubt that in volunteering for infantry service there is required courage, self-sacrifice, and love of country. We should be most ungrateful did we not honour and reverence those noble men who risked danger and death in fervent hope that through their sacrifices certain ideals might be fulfilled.

Nevertheless, the day is already dawning when Scriptural prophecies regarding the end of human warfare will be fulfilled. War has been condemned by the universal conscience of man. It is condemned by economists as a stupendous waste of material needed for the welfare of mankind. It is condemned by jurists as an utterly unjust means of determining the right or wrong of any question. It is condemned by moralists as an outrage on truth, as a denial of human rights, as a relic of barbarism. It is condemned by religion as a colossal sin, as the supreme sacrilege toward God.

Few thinkers of this generation ever hoped to see so daring an act as the signing of the Paris Peace

Pact, August 27, 1928. Joseph Fort Newton has well termed this event "the most amazing spectacle in the story of mankind." He further says, "In all his journeyings, the sun has never looked down upon anything of like moment, the races of men outlawing what has been the law, habit, and even glory of man from time immemorial. It is like a miracle."

Now is this pact to mean that we can no longer be patriotic? Can we not display the ideal soldier's qualities of self-sacrifice, courage, and devotion to the good of mankind without participating in a murderous war? Paul's answer is that the Christian life is a militant crusade. "Put on the whole armour of God," he says. "Put on the breastplate of righteousness, take up the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." The sixth chapter of Ephesians describes a Christian soldier. To Timothy the apostle wrote, "Endure thou hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

The Christian soldier will face hatred and sometimes violence for his views, but his own weapons are not to torture men nor to destroy their lives. His weapons are to heal and strengthen and save. He fights against regiments of greed and selfishness and injustice, but he takes the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

In a certain way it requires more courage to be a soldier of peace than to be a soldier of war. The soldier of peace does not usually have the support of public opinion to cheer him onward in his fight. He must often crusade alone against the antagonism

of horrified neighbours and friends. This is the kind of heroism demanded of us under the new patriotism!

As we study the lives of the heroes of peace who have blazed the way to a better world, we can hardly say that they have missed the dangers and thrills that come to the heroes of war. We think of the pioneers in the anti-slavery movement, whose moral courage and social passion loosed the gigantic thunderbolts against human bondage in America.

There was William Lloyd Garrison. Born of poor parents in Newburyport, Massachusetts, reared as a printer's apprentice, and knowing, therefore, something of the feeling of the oppressed, Garrison became interested at an early age in the abolition of slavery. Organizing the New England Anti-Slavery Society, he could find only eleven other men to unite with him in his cause. Church leaders, of whom he expected instant support, turned him away. Why should he stir up trouble? Why attack an institution so deeply entrenched with high society and immense capital? Did he not know that it was dangerous to upset the established order of things? One day he was mobbed in his office and would have been hanged in front of Boston City Hall but for the intervention of some ardent women supporters who defied the frenzied crowd. The state of Georgia offered five thousand dollars to any gang of thugs who would capture him and deliver him to that territory. In obedience to protests from the South, the governors of Massachusetts and New York, true to the style of politicians, recommended that it be made a penal offense to speak or write against slavery. To be an abolitionist was just as dan-

gerous as to be a Christian in the time of Nero or a pacifist in the time of the World War. But Garrison kept on until the tide of public opinion turned and until substantial men came out in defense of his cause. Garrison was a hero of peace.

There was Elijah Lovejoy, a Presbyterian minister in Illinois. One day hoodlums chained an old negro to a tree and burned him to death. Rev. Mr. Lovejoy's paper, the *Observer,* was the only one in that whole region to express moral indignation against the atrocity. As a result, a mob threatened his life, burned down his printing shop, and destroyed his press. His second press was destroyed and his life again put in jeopardy by the mob. A third press was ordered by the aid of friends. Mr. Lovejoy appealed to the Mayor of Alton for protection, but was assured that no help would be forthcoming from that quarter. A crowd surrounded his printing shop, waving torches, and shouting like wild men. When the pastor appeared in the doorway, he was shot down by a volley of musket bullets. Elijah Lovejoy must be put down as a hero of peace.

There are hundreds more whose exploits in the past stir our blood and make our hearts beat fast with pride in the heroic qualities of men and women at their best. Modern life would yield a score more of such heroes. Nobel prizes reveal some; others are hidden from view.

We need eyes to see that our own age calls for the heroic just as did the age of slavery agitation. Who will stand like men against the humanity-destroying liquor traffic? Who will help win the battle against the oppressors of the unemployed? Who will dare to enlist in the modern crusade against

militarism? Who will build that public attitude which will make the Anti-War Treaty a reality? Who will demolish the well fortified public delusion that competitive armaments ever saved any nation from war? Who will teach the world that the only security against war is to be seen in such a relationship as exists between Canada and the United States? Here three thousand miles of gunless, fortless boundary line testify that the only effective armament is the armament described in our Scripture,—the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Who will go over the top against the barbed wire entanglements of denominationalism, of inter-racial prejudice, of wrong in high places?

It is difficult for us to realize that the world has turned a corner as far as the future of war is concerned. We are enamoured of the prospect that all our heroism under the new patriotism shall be devoted to the causes of peace. Thoughtful veterans hail that day with the high ecstasy of men who have looked into the future and fought for ideals. I know you will pardon my writing of an experience which printed with indelible ink this truth upon my mind.

It happened in the year 1924, the last time I marched in an American Legion parade. I was dressed in my best uniform, my Sam Brown belt shining with new polish, my insignia glistening in the sun. As I looked at a crowd of spectators, a feeling came over me that was akin to a religious experience. I saw heroes on the side lines as I had never seen them before. There was a mother whose husband had died seven years before, leaving her

with four children. She had surrendered her pride, taken the most remunerative work she could find in preference to more dignified but less profitable labour, and had given her very life blood that her children might have an education and a home. I felt for the moment that if any one deserved public honour that day, it was this broken-bodied but heroic mother. Here were honest editors, faithful mail carriers, upright lawyers, underpaid but devoted teachers, sympathetic employers, fearless firemen, dependable policemen, and conscientious clergymen. I felt much like shouting: "Fall in here; join in the line of march. Your shining faces shall be your insignia. You are the soldiers of peace whom we should honour this day." I thought I witnessed the sunset of the old patriotism and the sunrise of the new!

All who do their part for the building of a nobler community; all who answer the call to the colours in the bivouac of common life are heroes. All who help to raise the American standard of conduct and culture and character may join with Katherine Lee Bates in the prayer which closes her great poem on *America The Dream:*

> *"Oh, to redeem from our America's still folded eyes,*
> *The marvel of her undiscovered dream."*

What shall be our memorial to the heroes of the World War? We shall remember them tenderly with our flowers, our thoughts, our gratitude, our prayers. We shall honour them for their bravery as they starved or bled or writhed under the agony of the deadly gas in the jungles of Belleau Wood.

But our supreme tribute shall come as we enlist as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, armed with the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Our supreme objective as Christian soldiers shall be to exalt peace time heroism and to inspire mankind with the romance of the new patriotism.

Hermann Hagedorn has written a poem, *The Boy in Armour,* which lays before us this stirring call of the new patriotism. He represents the spirit of a dead soldier pointing his accusing finger into the faces of those of us who live, and saying:

"You cried across the worlds, and called us sons!
We came as sons, but what you made of us
Were bleeding shapes upon an altar, slain
To appease your god Inertia where he sits
Muttering dead words and chewing at old bones.
Because you would not think, we had to die!
Weep not for us, but for your own trapped selves.
We died. And there you stand, no step advanced!

* * * * * *

Wake dreaming world! Think, oh gray world bewitched!
Out through untraveled spaces where no mind
Has dared to venture, let your sails be spread!
O world, there is another way to serve
Justice and liberty, than thus to fling
The glory and the wonder of young lives
Beneath the hoofs of horses! Send your soul
Into the earth and through the clouds to find it!
Dead eyes keep watch! You shall not sleep nor rest.
We died. And now you others who must live
Shall do a harder thing than dying is—
For you shall think! And ghosts will drive you on!"

XVI

CHRIST AS SHEPHERD

A striking story is told of the artist, George Frederick Watts. After painting his famous picture, *The Rich Young Ruler,* he invited a number of his friends to see it unveiled. The great day came when the artist was to reveal to the world the product of a decade of his pains and labour and vision. The people were there, but they were not well prepared for the high event. The women were chattering about whist parties, new styles, and neighbours' quarrels; the men were seriously and solemnly talking about the stock market, politics, and prize fights. Finally, one member of the party, a fellow-artist, became impatient to see the picture. Watts, however, could not bear to pull the curtains aside while the people were in their unappreciative mood; so he devised a very clever scheme. He announced that refreshments were being served down-stairs. Immediately two-thirds of his callers disappeared, forgetting without much difficulty all thoughts of the picture, and looking for something to satisfy their appetites. Next he told his guests that he had a new horse, pure bred, in his stable. More people, mostly men, disappeared. Then he said that he had a beautiful and rare plant in the conservatory. More people departed, and he was left alone with his friend to talk in a symphony of silence and understanding while his artist companion gazed raptured and awed upon the picture

of the rich young ruler, who went away sorrowful. Artistic splendour could not be disclosed to those who were unprepared.

This need for preparedness is evident in all our church work.

It was not a psychologist or a theologian, but a business man who told me this week that he appreciated the difficulty of the preacher in making a spiritual appeal on Sunday morning. Very few of the parishioners, said this man, are prepared for the morning service. There is no prayer in the home, not even the cultivation of a reverent atmosphere which comes through the custom of returning thanks at the common meal; there is no reading of sacred literature. Saturday night is a time for dissipation which sends people to church Sunday morning dazed with weariness and sleeplessness. To cap the climax, many of those who come to church feel it necessary to devour the contents of the Sunday paper beforehand. In that frame of mind they come to church expecting the music or the sermon to inspire them. Their souls are insulated against any possibility of contact with God.

Similarly, the radiance of Christmas cannot reveal itself to us unless we are spiritually prepared for the high hour of Christ's birth in the world and in our hearts. To many thousands of people in the United States Christmas will mean absolutely nothing but a vacation, a gluttonous meal or two, beastly intoxication, gift orgies, or mercantile profits. Many a heart will be hardened against the songs of Christmas with their messages of hope and redemption, of peace and good will among men.

As we read the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, we

realize that far back in 750 B. C. the Jews were preparing for the coming of the first Christmas. In the eleventh verse we have a mirror of their spiritual homesickness. They were as sheep without a shepherd, and they suffered with a deep hunger of the heart for One who could lead them with assurance and certainty in the everlasting ways of God. To me it is interesting to see that Isaiah's symbolism of the Saviour to come was that of a Shepherd and that Jesus 750 years later described His relationship to the people in exactly the same terms. It shows how integral a part of the nation's life was the shepherd scene, and it reflects the spiritual imagination of a race of people who could see the halo on the common activities of their day. Let us see if we can what Isaiah could have had in mind as he hailed the coming of One who should feed His flock like a shepherd!

The most obvious thing about a shepherd is that he is a leader. In the tenth chapter of John we have an accurate description of the shepherd going before his sheep as they are released from the sheepfold and starting out for their day's grazing. "He calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out." To "follow like a sheep" has become a byword, and yet we all understand how desperate is our human need for leadership. We need some one whom we can trust and whom we can follow in confidence. There are in some quarters of America murmurings against democracy. Democracy so often makes Congressional action one long attempt to secure a balance of power between various blocs. The settlement of questions by referenda simply puts the decision in the hands of the factions which

can finance the greatest whirlwind of propaganda. In 1921 the American Brewers Association gleefully boasted, "We have a million dollars with which to break down the Eighteenth Amendment." They have kept up a merciless attack ever since, using every means which the imagination could produce to influence public opinion. Many surprising conversions are to be reported for their side. As long as the average voter is as suggestible as a fourteen-year-old boy, democracy will be a mixed blessing, and there will be a deep longing in the hearts of some people for concentration of power in the hands of competent men.

Likewise, in the realm of character there is need for leadership. Too many of us inside the church and out have been harrowed by the spectacle of moral disaster that comes to men and women who take the moral law into their own hands. A surprisingly large number of people have rejected all leadership for their lives and have finally driven themselves into a state of hopelessness because of what seems to them to be a perfectly futile existence. They are now looking for an escape from it all. Christ as a leader does not take us away from life to find that spiritual strength which we need, that awareness of God and stability of faith which is so vital to our most compelling requirements. As some one has said, "Jesus did not find God through an exalted dismissal of the conflicts of life." Constantly His disciples urged Him to escape from difficult situations, but always He chose to face His struggles and overcome them. Finally, against the advice of all His friends, He set His face to go toward Jerusalem. He found peace in His soul, not

by any underground railway of escape, but by bravely confronting issues with the quiet confidence that in doing God's will He could never fail. I have no doubt that the words of Isaiah 10:31 often resounded like a verse from a great martial hymn in His ears: "They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

In all our problems we are often tempted to look backward for the way of an escape. When we get into that frame of mind, however, we insure ourselves against happiness. Perhaps your real joy in living is yet to come as you determine never even to think of turning away in desperation from your most important duties. There is zest in the battle when we determine to face forward and find some way to win. The best way to guarantee unhappiness in the home is to spend your waking hours wondering why you ever married the man or woman who is now your husband or wife and wishing you could get out of the resulting situation gracefully! There is some way of finding happiness and the highest self-expression out of some of the most hopeless combinations of human beings. You will be happy when you learn to laugh at difficulties and to live a life of happiness as God intended that you should. It is very unfortunate for one to look at his work only in terms of its discouragements. Soon all interest in the position at hand vanishes, and all the spare nervous energy is expended in wishing one were somewhere else. I never enjoyed the ministry very much when I was inclined to compare my church with other churches and to wish I were in

some other place. I find myself happiest when I look at every handicap as a challenge to be met with expectancy of victory. I believe that one is contented only when he thinks of his field of service as a permanent responsibility. One field can be just as difficult as another or just as worth while. Follow the Shepherd Christ, who said, " Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," and you will some day look back at this very hour of your greatest obstacle with rewarding satisfaction. Think of your home, your family, your work, your financial troubles only as handicaps from which you would like to escape, and you will render yourself unhappy now and ever afterward.

I talked to a man in a hospital one day, who told of his terrific struggle as an immigrant from England looking for a job in New Hampshire. He had come over with his family of three children and a wife at the behest of his mother-in-law, who invited him to stay in her house until he should find work. A quarrel between his wife and her mother soon put an end to the arrangement. He was obliged to rent a house and pay all expenses for his family without any hope of employment. Many an evening he came home after a long tramp through the deep snow with nothing to report but more failure. One evening he returned very late to find his wife sobbing as if her heart would break. Upon inquiry he found that she was afraid he had decided to escape from the whole situation, leaving her alone with her children. On his hospital bed this fine, strong man trembled with emotion as he said, " You bet it was tough, but how glad I am that I stayed with it and

saw my wife and kiddies through!" "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee," saith the Lord, but He will never lead you away from the glorious battle against the heavy odds of life.

But the shepherd is not only a leader. He is also a protector. "The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep," says the Master. The hired man will run away from the sheep when he sees the wolf coming, but the true shepherd recognizes them as his own. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead them that are with young," says Isaiah. The shepherd is hurt when the sheep are wounded or killed. It was truly said of the Christ, "He was bruised for our iniquities." The physical pain of the cross was no doubt equalled by the heart pains of the Christ as He saw people deliberately choosing the lower way and missing the great rewards of life. An atheist once said, "If I were God, the sorrows of the world would break my heart." W. Robertson Nicoll replied, "He knew not what he said; the sorrows of the world did break the Heart of hearts."

We cannot go into any modern city without being impressed with the fact that mankind is in need of a protector. Will you tell me what chance an average girl has who must go to Boston or Chicago to seek a livelihood? Demons in the form of men will watch for her hour of weakness and loneliness and desperation and prey upon her as a lion preys upon a lamb. A young man is in just as great danger. The savage in the jungle does not meet so many artificial stimulations for his worst passions,

so many temptations to wade in the deep mire of revolting and repulsive vice.

What is the protection which Christ gives to souls such as these? There is first the constructive suggestion of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus does not say much about sin in that sermon. He does have some interesting advice, however, as to how we should fill our minds with thoughts and resolutions that automatically crowd out all desire for wrong doing. He warns that the first danger does not come in overt acts but in overt thoughts. His teachings support the latest principles in boy psychology. Keep the boy interested in wholesome and interesting occupations and thoughts, and he will not turn elsewhere for amusement. But Christ offers more than advice. He offers companionship. He is not a dead statue or a theological formula. He is an ever-present spirit. Said an optician once to a patient who was looking through a microscope on the doctor's eye: "When you can see my eye as a ball of fire with blood coursing through like red flames, then you know the focus is perfect." Our focus is perfect as we look on Christ only when we can see Him as a living Counsellor with us every hour. Whenever I think of the friendships which I made during the war, I think of a German lad of about eighteen years who enlisted in the Marines. Never before or since have I seen a man persecuted as this young man was persecuted. He was accused of being an enemy in disguise, he was suspected wherever he went, he was cursed and underrated by his superior officers, he was continually maligned by his fellow privates who tried to make fun of him for his moral stalwartness and religious integrity.

Once I asked him how he stood it so well, for I never heard him speak revengefully of any man. His soul seemed to be unbowed under all his persecution. His answer was a testimony out of the very fire of fierce human experience. "Whenever they get after me, I think I have a Friend far greater than all of my enemies put together. That Friend I can feel at my side saying, 'Lo, I am with you alway.'" That was the shepherd Christ caring for His own! There *is* a guarantee for human character, and that is a complete surrender to Christ!

Perhaps some of you feel this very need for a leader, for a protector. The rich young ruler turned away from Christ sorrowful, but not sorry enough to give up the one thing that stood between himself and his God. The Shepherd Christ can do nothing for us unless we are willing to follow Him. If there is one thing we need to give up, let us make the great surrender. Tell us after this service that you want the Christ of Christmas to be your own Christ. You want to join His forces by uniting with this church and confessing your open discipleship before the world. Perhaps it is years since you have brought a friend to church or shown any vital interest in the great undertakings of the kingdom. We all need to clear the way in our lives for the high tide of Christmas living. Even as the artist, Mr. Watts, longed for friends who could share with him the beauty of a great picture, so God longs for souls who will share the riches of Christ's spirit. What shall we do with the Christ? That is the perennial question which we will not and cannot escape. Shall we make Him the Shepherd of our souls?

XVII

THE CHRIST OF THE MANGER

TO me it is of high importance that the Christ of the ages was born in a barn. Just let your imagination grasp the meaning of such a situation to-day. What would you think of your neighbour if he told you that his little son was born in a livery stable? You would immediately ask, "Why was he not born in St. Peter's hospital?" You might be tempted to call him a "ne'er-do-well." Jesus' birthplace was of the humblest sort imaginable, signifying that humility is an integral part of the Christian faith.

This humility is seen, in the first place, in Christ's absolute independence of the tyranny of property. The manger scene harmonizes well with the teachings of Christ regarding the superiority of the victorious soul over wealth. When Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," He seemed to sense the truth that each requires nothing less than the utmost energy and devotion that there is in man. If we allow ourselves to get hungry for money, we soon set ourselves against other men and come to the place where we prefer property to human beings. We become victims of an insatiable appetite worse than the appetite for alcohol because it is likely to affect more people. Our inner life is shadowed and then lost in the inky blackness of the blind hunt for more gold. Jesus could see this very clearly, and

so advised the rich young ruler to sell all that he had and give to the poor. His money was making him proud, and pride is the deadly enemy of the Christian virtue of humility.

John Haynes Holmes says that the three most religious men in history had identically the same attitude toward money. St. Francis of Assisi had passed through a youthful stage of wild luxury, but renounced his wealth when he was converted. When the bishop protested against the extremities of his practise, St. Francis replied, "If we possessed property, we would need arms for its defense, for it is the cause of many quarrels and lawsuits. The love of God and one's neighbours usually finds many obstacles therein." Gandhi is so completely consecrated to a self-sacrificing devotion to his fellow men and so utterly absorbed in his passionate worship of God that Dr. Frederick B. Fisher recently said, "He is the nearest approach to the incarnation of the life of Jesus Christ that the world beholds." It is worth while to see that Gandhi resists the encroachments of Western civilization and tries to hold his people back to the spinning-wheel stage because he is afraid of progress that places profits above human values. He has renounced a large inheritance, living now on two dollars a month and wearing nothing but a loin-cloth.

No one who looks around him to-day can deny that modern wealth has almost annihilated the spirit of humility. Let us consider Paul's advice to the Philippians (2:3): "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem the other better than himself." We are not inclined to esteem others as better than ourselves.

We are the hapless victims of a never ending circle. We pursue a mirage when we think we shall some day be happy because we shall have reached the pinnacle of pride in material advantages. If we drive a four-cylinder car, we are easily dissatisfied after some one has taken us for a ride in a six-cylinder limousine. We are hungry for the things that money can buy because our advertisements consistently urge us to keep up with the neighbours and to outrank them if possible.

It is horrifying to see what men will do in this fruitless attempt to satisfy pride. Because of pride, the United States refuses to join the World Court unless other nations will agree that no advisory opinion shall ever be rendered that will affect the affairs of this nation; because of pride, small denominations persist long after they have ceased to do any good in communities. Pride prevents youth from learning vital lessons about the way of life; pride wrecks friendship, splits homes asunder, and brings despair to the rich and poor alike.

There is no hope of happiness except through the Christian independence from the livery of the proud. There is no satisfaction for the self-seeker on this side of world supremacy. If we should reach that peak, we should awake to find ourselves utterly comfortless because our friends would be gone. Love and respect do not come to those who seek self-promotion for its own sake. It is not the way of life.

We know there are cynics who say, "That is all right for ministers to say, but watch them move when they get a chance at a higher salary or at wider recognition!" Yes, even preachers fail very often

to win against pride, but they also succeed unbeknown to the onlooking world. I know of a minister who is now going to a larger field. Private news agencies are saying that he is going for a higher salary. The fact of the matter is that he will be receiving a lower income, and that he has declined several offers of higher salaries just because of other considerations, which are moral and spiritual in nature. I know a young preacher who has refused three opportunities to enter larger fields paying at least one thousand dollars more than he is now receiving. He relinquished them calmly and without serious difficulty even though he needs the money badly to pay college debts. His friends called him foolish because he was considering what he thought were important moral principles in making his decisions. But to this day he has had no regrets. There is a thrill of satisfaction in laughing at the lure of pride and reveling in the deep contentment that comes in choosing righteousness and duty rather than fine gold. Try it next time an opportunity comes to choose between money and duty, or between net profits and the privilege of sharing in a noble task. You will understand more clearly the radiant meaning of the manger scene in Bethlehem.

Again, the manger scene reminds us that Christianity means identification with the humblest people on earth. It defies Albert Wiggam with his insistence upon royal birth or venerable family trees as the hope of the world. It is necessary to exercise our imagination to understand to what extent the birth of Jesus identified Him with the great mass of struggling humanity. Nazareth was an isolated hill town situated on a caravan route, to be sure, but

considered provincial. Jerusalem was the metropolis with its high officialism, its power, and its prestige. Like most cities it was proud of its culture, its tradition, and its worldly wisdom. Jesus' mother had come from a town so removed from the center of Jerusalem's thought and life that its people were known by their accent. They were looked upon as illiterate country folk. But from this circle came Jesus, to-day the world's highest authority on morality, men's only hope of salvation.

Woodrow Wilson once declared that a civilization is never renewed from the top but from the roots. This was certainly true as far as Christianity was concerned. It began, not with royalty or with the intellectuals, but with the lowliest of men. For the first three centuries its chief support came from slaves and labourers. Not only was Jesus born among the lowly, but throughout all His ministry when popular acclaim would have accorded Him whatever He wanted, He never lost His irrepressible passion to deliver the oppressed from their bondage. He not only pitied them and spoke general truths concerning them, but He set Himself the task of saving them. He applied His gospel directly to the conditions of His time. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me," He said, "because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those that are bruised."

Here, again, we find Jesus and Gandhi and St. Francis, the three most religious souls in history, sharing a common trait. St. Francis, although born in luxury, was unusually sensitive to the suffering of

his fellow men. So sympathetic a heart had he that he often stopped to save crawling insects from being crushed in the road; he delivered birds from their cages because he loved them; he ministered to lepers whom others would not touch. So dynamic was his life in charitable impulses that he and his followers became known as "brothers of the poor."

Gandhi is well known for his unusual step in renouncing his lucrative law practice in South Africa to share the sufferings and relieve the pain of the two thousand Indian labourers who had been brought there as indentured servants. To-day he is giving himself, in the midst of unimaginable opposition, to the welfare of the fifty million untouchables in India. He eats with them, sleeps with them, shares his whole personality with them in a land where they are supposed to be barred from all the rights and privileges of ordinary society. If you know anything about the plight of the Negro in the South, you can multiply it one hundred times, and then believe that you know something about the condition of the untouchables in India. Is it any wonder that Gandhi reminds us of Jesus Christ who took His stand against the scribes and Pharisees of His day, bringing Himself to the cross in His espousal of the widows whose houses these officials devoured and whose mites they despised?

We must not think that there is no work to do in our own time in releasing captives. Women are not free to-day. They still cringe in a million homes under the age-old superstition that men are superior. The plight of the Negroes, who number twelve million among us, would be a nightmare to any of us if we could take their places even for a day. A

rather typical society woman singing in *The Messiah* chorus in this vicinity found that two Negresses were sitting next to her accustomed place on a certain rehearsal night. She grew indignant and said, "Well, I guess I am not going to sit next to two niggers." After a while she found a satisfactory seat so that she could be comfortable while she sang about the birth of the Christ of human love!

A traveler relates that an old Jew was caught weeping on a liner bound for America. Upon investigation it was found that he was overcome with joy because Christians had been kind to him on the voyage. He had never known kindness to come from Christians to Jews before, because he lived in a country where Jews were harried and tortured and even killed during the war, and always outlawed before the war. In the passion of the world conflict, Christians had crowded all the Jews of his village into their synagogue and then set fire to the edifice. His voyage to America took place in 1919. We are wondering if he is still weeping for joy because of the kind treatment received from Christians!

It is quite clear that church people ought to lead out in a modern renaissance of human pity and deliverance. The church is often guilty of placing emphasis on rank in spite of Jesus' admonition, "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." The present-day trend toward democracy is indicated in the advice of a theological professor who was asked how he would proceed if a bishop should venture into his service. His answer was, "Treat him like any other sinner."

The humility of the manger scene also reminds us of our need of God. The most disturbing expression of pride comes from men who are so self-sufficient that they can say, "Why should I feel any need of God?" They point with pride to the achievements of modern science to protect them from danger, feed them when hungry, and cure them when they are ill. One man writes in the *Atlantic Monthly* of the ignorance of Jesus regarding Old Testament interpretation, the end of the world, and natural law. He does not say quite enough about His ability to rise above the environment of His day and see with miraculous precision into the heart of human problems. He does not see the essentials as Browning saw them when he wrote in *Christmas Eve and Easter Day:*

> *I would praise such a Christ, with pride and joy*
> *That He, as none beside,*
> *Has taught us how to keep the mind*
> *God gave Him as God gave His kind,*
> *Freer than any from fleshly taint.*

Not for physical relief should we feel most desperately our need of God. We may well leave such measures to science, provided science is kept close enough to the humanity of Christ to care. But we need God for moral and spiritual reasons. We need an overwhelming sense of His presence that will keep us free from the might of money passion. We need a pervading sense of God's love in our hearts to keep ourselves aware of the divinity of all mankind with its representatives at our very doors. We need Him lest our ideal of action become low and unworthy, pitched on the level of

expediency rather than on the high plane of exalted service to God and man. St. Francis needed God and spent hours in private devotions. Gandhi needs God and spends an hour a day in availing prayer, twenty-four hours every week in complete retirement. Jesus needed God and distinguished Himself by His steady and sure reliance upon His heavenly Father for His daily strength. James wrote to his parishioners, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up." He will lift you up to the heights where stands the Christ of the humble manger!

XVIII

THE GUIDING STAR

WHATEVER our critics say about the materialism and the sordidness of our time, they cannot escape the overpowering fact that Christmas has taken the world captive. While reading a Boston newspaper, I found to my utter amazement that eighteen of its thirty-six pages were given over entirely to the Christmas theme. There is little wonder that the world should recognize the importance of Christmas. No one, with eyes to see, or mind to think, or a heart to feel, can look at human history without seeing that the birth of a babe in Bethlehem literally set forces going that changed the whole character of the human race and lifted the entire world to an altogether new standard of thought and action. Every symbol of Christmas and every story connected with that great birthday of the Christ has achieved a new significance in the minds of men.

One of the most alluring and at the same time most meaningful of those symbols is the guiding star that the three wise men followed in their quest of the Christ. There has always been something appealing about the stars; they have a magnetic pull on the soul. Moses had to warn his people against star worship: "And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, . . . shouldest be driven to worship, and serve them." The stars exerted a great

power over the downcast spirit of Job and helped him to sense the mysterious power of God. He thought he heard the very voice of his Lord saying, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" And again, "Canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" The Psalmist felt the stars stimulate religious imagination and enlarge his conception of God, for he sang, "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names." In the vision of Daniel we have a clue to the place that the stars took in the mind of the great seer. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." It is no small wonder that the three wise men from the East, seeking a Saviour, hungry for religious certainty, should place implicit confidence in the stars. It was part of the characteristic belief of the day. Every new star carried with it a great meaning. What did these three men seek, and what did they see in the stars that gave them hope?

In the first place, there can be no doubt that they searched for friendliness, for the light that the stars give to the traveler in the darkness is symbolical of friendliness. It must have been a lonely world filled with gods, none of whom were friendly to men. Every tribe had its god, but these gods were simply guards over the conduct and the fates of men. They were gods of terror and of revenge; they were gods of disease, of fire, of earthquake, of war, and of death. The soul of man was hungry for a God of love and light and friendliness. Christmas provides food to satisfy that hunger. We frequently forget that the central figure of Christmas is not

Santa Claus but Jesus Christ. We are often so busy with our shopping, our cards, and our dinners that we overlook the radiant fact that Christmas marks the entrance of Jesus into the world.

Christmas marks the initiating love of God for the children of earth. We often fear that God is bound by natural law and cannot do anything on His own initiative. But James Martineau has given us the happy side of this truth in words that bring hope to us all. "Behind and amid all the punctualities of law abides in infinite remainder the living and unpledged Spirit. Here He has made no rule but the everlasting rule of holiness, and written no pledge but the pledge of inextinguishable love. Hence, without violated rule, He can individualize His regards; enter with gentle help; and while keeping faith with the universe, knock at the gate of every lonely heart." Without breaking any natural law, God does all within His power to place within our reach the spiritual forces that we need. He sent Jesus into the world that our longing for the saving truth might be fulfilled. Christmas means that God does not say, "Take my salvation or leave it." He says, "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." William James once said, "A gulf stream will flow through a straw if it is parallel with the current." The gulf stream of God's heart-warming love will flow through us if we will but set our lives so that it can enter in.

Then again, the stars have always been used as a means of ascertaining the right direction in traveling. If the three wise men were normal, they had a longing for the stability and uniformity for which

the stars stand. Astronomers can tell one hundred years ahead just when Rigel will rise and when it will disappear from our vision. No one has yet been misled by the North Star or the Southern Cross. The stars in their courses are as reliable as the rising sun. There is a longing in every human heart for this mathematical certainty with reference to the essential facts of life. The three wise men represented, no doubt, three different religions. Wherever they turned, there was a new theory of life. They longed for reliability in religious belief.

Jesus brought the very certainty of mathematics into the moral life. If mathematicians prove that a circle is always composed of three-hundred-sixty degrees, Jesus proved that "he that saveth his life shall lose it," and he that loseth his life for the sake of Christ and righteousness shall find it. If chemists prove that two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen always make water, Jesus proved that the narrow way always leads to life everlasting and the broad way to destruction. If geometricians can prove that a straight line is always the shortest distance between two points, Jesus proved that good fruit can never grow on bad trees or spiritual harvests from mere material splendour. Many more eternal principles of the moral and spiritual life did Jesus prove. He established the fact that love is greater than revenge; He proved that unselfishness is more rewarding than self-interest; He demonstrated that the great force of the world is spiritual personality and not brute force. Supremely, He revealed the certainty of God in the soul of man. These laws are as unchangeable as the course of the stars, and they are as reliable as guides for our lives.

Not only do the stars stand for friendly light and for direction; they also stand for mysteries that point to God. It is still true that "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Rufus Jones has said that "religion is primarily and at heart the personal meeting of the soul with God"; and again: "There can be a living religion only so long as the soul of man is capable of experiencing the fresh bubbling of the living water within and can know for himself that a heart of eternal love beats in the central deeps of the universe within his reach."

Persian lore expresses the belief that at the river of death the soul of man meets a beautiful, shining figure, which says, "I am your true self, your best self, your real self. I am the image of your ideals, your strivings, your resolves, your determined purposes. I am you. Henceforth, we merge together into a harmonious life." While this is Oriental imagery, it nevertheless brings to our minds the towering importance of our ideals, our desire to be friendly with the best we know. The three visitors from the East, being wise, appreciated this essential fact, and were lonely in their souls for a God whom they could love and come to know as a Friend. Here is the central meaning of Christmas: God became flesh and dwelt among us. He came to help us in the only way that we can be helped. He identified Himself with us; He shared our mode of living, faced our temptations, hungered and thirsted with us, was loved and was hated, bore our griefs, and fought our battles. Certainly we should be glad on Christmas Day! But we should also be grateful! We should bring not only our gifts of gold, frankin-

cense, and myrrh, but this gift of our lives. For the star of Christmas leads us by its light of friendliness, by its infallible direction, and by its mystery to God whom we seek.

XIX

CHRISTMAS HERALDS

SHEPHERDS watched their flocks by night on Judæan hills. They were hungry-hearted shepherds. In their loneliness they had no soul-satisfying faith. Expectancy was in the air, however, for the prophets had long foretold the coming of a Redeemer. Suddenly, as they paced backward and forward, huddling the lambs and the sheep together, they were caught in a flood of glory. The angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. But the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." There was something eccentric in the message, for the shepherds were not accustomed to think of the coming Redeemer as a Messenger of joy to all people. He was to come to the Jews alone. Something eternal sounded in the angel's song—"which shall be to all people." All people in all ages were some day to rejoice in that glorious event; the birth of a babe in humble Bethlehem was freighted with significance of which the shepherds could never dream. Here was the great divide between the deserts of sin and of faithlessness and the rich meadows of righteousness and of faith. The angels foretold a sunrise which was to smite the darkness that enshrouded the souls of men, and which was to bathe the world in the dazzling splendour of Christian hope.

No wonder, then, that after the hearts of men had caught fire with the great redemptive passion of our Lord, a day was set aside to commemorate His birth and to join harp and voice to the angel's song of annunciation. No more appropriate day could have been chosen than December twenty-fifth. This was the day celebrated by the Roman world as the "Festival of the Winter Solstice." The ancients assembled on this day to express their exultation at the lengthening of the hours of sunlight. This was a source of great happiness, for, without street lights, electricity, or even adequate oil lamps, the evenings were long, and weird, and lonely. This was the one day of all the year when the Romans gave their slaves a holiday. Many of the Christian disciples were servants, and on this day alone could they be free to worship God without restraint and without jeopardy. To them it was an ideal occasion to remember the birth of their Redeemer, for was it not He who said, "I am the Light of the world"? Was it not Jesus who drove away the shadows and lengthened the daytime of eternities? To them the real Conqueror of darkness was the Man of Galilee.

To-day, after nineteen hundred years, we can see even more clearly the pertinence of the time. As we turn our telescopes on the pre-Christian era and note its degradation, and then observe the world as it is, we realize that this earth saw the beginning of a shorter night when the Christ-child was born. We see that history is divided into two great sections—B. C. and A. D. The first is the record of unbridled lust for power, for ruthless dominion, and for selfish indulgence. It is a story of a world that

knew not God. The second is a story of strenuous combat with evil, of a slow but certain elevation in the moral and spiritual idealism of the race. It is the scene of martyrdoms and crucifixions in the name of righteousness. It is a moving picture of human enlightenment, of the certain conquest of love, of the crashing of hates, and the emancipation of the oppressed. From that moment in the magnificent drama of man, the sick, the ignorant, the sinful, the slave,—all caught a fresh gleam of hope. The eternal worth of a human soul won recognition and became a powerful force in the great campaign to release womanhood from degradation and the poor from oppression. The new introduction to the heavenly Father spelled the doom of those who would divide God's family into favoured and unfavoured sections and set them warring one with another.

Now the spirit of Christmas may enter more deeply into the heart of man this year than ever before in those nineteen hundred years of the Christian drama. A heavenly chorus might well mingle its voice with ours in the rejoicing over the birth of a Saviour. No longer need we hide ourselves in such reprehensible hypocrisy as we repeat the angel's words, "Glory to God in the highest; Peace on Earth; Good Will toward Men." In former years we have sung this song with one breath and have breathed songs of hate with the next. But the irresistible sweep of public sentiment toward the World Court, the Outlawry of War treaty, and a plain disposition toward disarmament bring us nearer the summit of the high peak of world peace than ever before. The mood of the earth's millions

is unmistakably for a warless world. We have not yet arrived, but we are *en route* to the day when the idiocy and stupidity of international conflicts will be seen by an awakened world, and a sensible means of adjusting disputes discovered. To-day we may celebrate Christmas with a clearer conscience than has been our privilege in the years gone by.

The symbols of Christmas have also a distinctive message to the present age. Here we have in the master pageant of history truths that burn into our souls as we test our modern civilization by their touchstones.

The shepherd story, one of the most beautiful to be found anywhere, is a protest against the social castes that are constantly threatening America.

It is a matter of common knowledge that our growing distance from pioneer conditions menaces that wholesome and Christian democracy so characteristic of a new country. In the frontier "a man's a man." He is judged not by his family tree, his estate, or his college diploma, but by his integrity, his usefulness, and his spiritual genuineness. Our tendency to-day is more and more to evaluate a man according to his name, number, and nativity. Europeans are right when they accuse us of worshipping the god of success. We idolize the man who has accumulated millions, without asking how he did it. The world champion prize fighter comes to town and is the thrill of the day. He is given five-hundred-thousand dollars for a single fistic encounter, while around him are scores of men who are contributing mightily to the constructive forces of the community, who cannot afford even to see the fight. Our superficial tests of a man's social worth

are rebuked by the story of the shepherds on the first Christmas. Here we have God's choicest announcement coming to the hearts of simple herdsmen. In looking for folk upon whom the honour should fall, in testing the worthiness of souls to hear wonderful news, God skipped the direct descendants of Abraham, the president of the First National Bank of Jerusalem, the mayor of Bethlehem, and the high priest of Herod's court. He paid no attention to the high names on the income tax reports, to the blue-bloods, or the royalty.

With God a man's worth is not deciphered by his apparel, his social grace, or his vocation. To God the greatest asset is a soul sensitized to His voice, a character transparently clear and humbly submissive to the divine will. God recognized only one aristocracy, and that was the aristocracy of service and of character. The shepherds found God's favour, because, although without royal blood, distinctive brain power, or accumulated thousands, they had kept their souls crystal clear and their minds receptive to heavenly voices. Christmas bids America test its shallow standards of man's measure. It calls us to see the sovereignty of true manhood and womanhood, and the supremacy of virtue over so-called social or professional successes. It bids us look again at the Christ whom the shepherds found. See how He transcended His environment! He was born of a hated, provincial, bigoted race, but He brought a redemptive life to all the world. He was all His life confined to a province, but His love knew no bounds; it belted the world. He was practically uneducated, unversed in poetry, in art, in architecture, in literature. But it was He who

brought the truth that sets men free, that to-day dominates the best poetry, inspires the greatest architecture, gives soul to the loftiest literature. America, rapidly becoming the centrifugal force in world finance, willing to do almost anything for money, needs to look at the shepherd scene and see that "Life consisteth not in the abundance of things which a man possesseth."

Even more significantly, the wise men from the East call a halt to our proud intellectualism. One of the heaviest items of expense in our educational advances is a certain intellectual pride that often barricades the way to spiritual enlightenment. Wiggam proudly asserts for instance, "We are no longer afraid of God." He represents the mood to which our century is often victim. We understand so much more of the workings of natural law that we rest in our wisdom, forgetting that behind the natural law there is mystery and God, and that no matter what we know, the soul will crave the companionship with the eternal God that mere wisdom can never cultivate. In the old days, for instance, when men were caught in a sea-storm, they huddled on the wooden decks of their frail little sailing vessels and prayed for mercy. To-day we boast our weather bureaus that predict storms, and we are not often caught unawares. We sail in floating palaces and look out through our staterooms only to laugh at the waves.

Dr. Fosdick reminds us that in the yesterdays when a smallpox epidemic swept over a town, the elders called a prayer meeting. The only result was more smallpox, for the germs spread as well in a prayer meeting as in a market place. To-day, we

do not call a prayer meeting; we call a doctor and quarantine the victims. In the generation just behind us, when men asked questions concerning natural wonders, the answer was, "God did it." To-day, we reply, "Evolution is responsible." We should say, "God did it through the process of evolution." But the effect is that men, priding themselves in their superior intellectual airs, often escort God out of their world, knowing not what they do. The wise men remind us of a wisdom beyond that of man, of a super-wisdom of spiritual insight. Evolution can never account for Christ. After almost two millenniums have gone, we are still like Peter,—following Christ afar off. Whatever our scientific discoveries, we cannot explain the appearance of Jesus, who lived a blameless life, who started an altogether new chapter in world history, and who, though born in a manger, is to-day the heart and center of the world's hope. Whatever our scholarship, we still stand in pitiful need of a satisfying relationship with our eternal Lord. The most complicated science of our time and the deepest philosophy cannot supplant the wisdom that comes when we surrender our wills to the King of Christmas. The wisdom of the wise men is not so much in seeing the star as in following it!

We have ascended far since that glory-crowned day when the shepherds heard the voice of the angels and the wise men saw the star of Bethlehem. Whole kingdoms have been turned upside down; entire continents have been discovered and made to blossom and bloom with the best fruits of civilization; vast areas of mystery have been explored, both in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, and

in the waters under the earth; the darkness of ignorance has been dispelled from unnumbered millions; womanhood has been placed on its rightful plane; childhood has been blessed, and human suffering has been greatly reduced through the conveniences furnished by modern inventions. The earth itself has ascended in space, so that we are literally millions of miles from that far-off event in Bethlehem of Judæa. But the wisdom of the three kings of the Orient is still our great need. It is the wisdom of the obedient soul; the culture of the Christ-filled life; the refinement of the spirit that heeds the call of God to the higher altitudes.

XX

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IMMORTALITY

THE story is told of a sailor who had been a victim of shipwreck. For fourteen weary hours he had clung in a death-grip to a floating piece of wreckage. His strength was waning; his body was chilled to the bone with the rigours of the sea-storm; at last he resigned himself to his fate and was about to close his eyes in surrender. Just then a cloud of smoke loomed forth on the horizon, then the three huge smoke-stacks that betokened the coming of a rescue ship. Strength returned; his body seemed warm again; despair was turned to hope; surrender was changed to victory. His life was to see a new sunrise rather than a last sunset.

This is a picture of the world when the weird black tragedy of Good Friday had laid a blanket of sorrow over its multitudes of heart-broken human folk. For a thousand years the Jewish race had looked forward to the coming of a Saviour. At last the angels' song of Christmas morning broke forth the happy tidings of a Redeemer born, whose name should be called Jesus. Uncounted thousands had been drawn to the Christ by His message of redemption, by His transparent clarity of soul, by His unfathomable depths of love for mankind. The disciples, most of all, had become certain of His sonship to God. But Good Friday came. The Master in whom they had placed such trust and whom they had come to worship was crucified by

an angry, surging, hysterical mob. To establish His mission, to speak the truth, and to stand for God had meant that Jesus had incurred the violence of the rulers and then of the crowds whom they controlled. He had gone to His cross without a murmur. He had died a cruel agonizing death out of immeasurable love for all mankind. He would save men even if they crucified Him for His wonderful compassion for them.

The last thread of hope was gone; Jesus was safely buried in Joseph's tomb. Like the shipwrecked sailor, the disciples were ready to sink into the oblivion of haunted disappointments and into the unsounded depths of a comfortless sorrow. Dark was the night that settled upon their world. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, suffered the tortures of heart-break through the stillness of Saturday.

But Easter morning sounded forth to these enshadowed souls the victory shouts of resurrection. Jesus could never die. He was alive forevermore. Nothing is more evident in history than that the disciples discovered the spiritual presence of Jesus with such unconquerable sureness that never again did they know a moment of unfaith or of despair. A broken body could never vanquish the soul of Christ. The spirit of Jesus was present to reassure His followers of the eternal victory of godliness. Easter morning marked the announcement in magnificent accents to the world that, whatever may happen to this body, the spirit that directs it, the character that inhabits it, is indestructible. It is made by God, and our heavenly Father will not allow His most precious possession to be destroyed.

From this morning and onward, the disciples knew no fears; persecution only gladdened their hearts, for they felt it an honour to be allowed to suffer for Christ's sake. Henceforth, they were conscious only of their spiritual integrity. Nothing was worth while in this world unless it favoured character growth; nothing could demand their allegiance unless it contributed to the strength of their souls. Henceforth, the test of all questions that came before them for decision was: what bearing does this have on the cause of right? What will this do to my soul? Only one thing was worth while and that was the preservation of those things that pertain to the character and to the spirit of man. Only such are eternal.

What is the significance of immortality, of the certainty of the future life, to us? First of all, immortality, so wondrously attested by the events of the first Easter morning, is significant for its vindication of human hopes. This fact is clearly presented by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick in his book, *The Assurance of Immortality,* to which the writer is heavily indebted.

Ideas of immortality have changed with the intelligence of man and with his growing capacity to understand the voice of God. At one time within your own memory it was believed that if a soul underwent certain ritualistic performances on this earth it would be saved for eternity in a state of perfect bliss and happiness. If the soul was guilty of a certain number of sins and had avoided the prescribed functions of the church, it was condemned to everlasting torture, and no power could ever save it. To-day we retain the idea of punishment, of

expiation. This is essential to justice. The soul that wilfully neglects righteousness on earth; that wilfully ignores the work of God; that knowingly performs as an obstacle to the cause for which Christ gave His life; that consciously spurns the service of Him who brought immortality to light, will necessarily be forced to pay a bitter toll in pangs of remorse, either in this world or in the next. We can know no more excruciating torture than the separation of the soul from God in the future life. And we can know no more blissful happiness than the privilege of associating with the choicest souls of earth when our spirits are ready for the great adventure. Reward for godliness and suffering for indifference to the claims of Christ and to the privileges of Christian service are both inevitable, and are demanded of a just and a moral God.

But, whatever our conception of the future life, the fact remains that God has planted a deep and ineradicable hope in every race of human beings through all recorded ages for a life beyond the grave. Easter is significant because it tells us that God is true to His children. A parent who places a hope of an education before a child and then wilfully denies it will never win good standing in a community. God has planted other desires in the human breast, and as far as human discernment can reach, He is true to His trust.

God has planted in His children the desire for intellectual enlightenment. He is answering that desire in a stupendous mass of knowledge daily crowding the minds of men and answering their hope of intellectual enlightenment. God has planted in His children a desire for beauty. Sunsets, moun-

tains, woodlands—all these remind us that God is answering the desire of the soul for beauty. One of the deepest, if not the deepest, of all human longings is the longing for immortality. Easter tells us that God is consistent here as elsewhere. He does not plant a noble hope without having an answer ready when the conditions are fulfilled.

Secondly, faith in the choicest characters of earth is enhanced by immortality, brought to light at Easter time. The loftiest characters of earth have grown great because they believed in immortality. Their courage for great moral issues came because they believed that their moral victories would be conserved in the eternities long after their bodies were decayed. Immortality gave them a high evaluation upon the human soul, and they acted as if its preservation and development were of utmost concern, while the material things of the world were but transitory and were to be judged by their contribution to character. This tells us why John Huss was burned in the flames for his convictions and became one of the world's great; this reminds us why Luther defied the world at the Diet of Worms and became a crusader for religious freedom; this tells us why John Wesley, and John Milton, and Immanuel Kant, and Dante, and Wordsworth, and Tennyson, and Browning, and Cromwell, and many statesmen from Washington and Lincoln to Gladstone and Wilson became enshrined in the grateful memories of their fellow men. They believed in the permanence of the soul, they lived accordingly, and blessed the world abundantly.

Jesus, the Prince of men as well as the Prince of peace, Jesus, before whom the world bows to-day

in humble reverence and in unutterable gratitude, never argued for immortality; He took it for granted, and His life has been the avenue to God ever since.

Immortality also means that our faith in a purposeful God is established. Nature abounds with illustrations that God works according to a mighty purpose. Long before man appeared, animals lived on earth; trees gave up their substance to enrich the ground and make it ready for man's tillage; deposits of ore were made in the rock; coal was tucked away far down in the chasms of earth where it would be safe; the temperature was adjusted to suit the needs of men. All through history, God has led men closer and closer to the ideal of perfection in character. Men are never at ease, for their consciences tell them of new altitudes to be reached in character-heights of unselfishness, of pure love, of service, of integrity, of godliness. Ever man strives onward toward the goal of civilization, to make the world a better place in which to live, and to stitch man's earth to God's sky so that man is at home with his heavenly Father.

Now, when God has struggled through all these centuries to lead men aright, what will He do with the human souls that are the product of this long travail? Will He sink them into oblivion as soon as the physical body is worn? That would be as purposeless and as aimless as an architect's working forty years on a cathedral and then blowing it to the skies. No. When God works hundreds of thousands of years to bring forth a human race with a character and soul acceptable to His fellowship, He is working for eternity. He plans that the

human soul which is the result of so much sacrifice—even the cross—will live forever, and, with the start received on earth, develop through the eternities to Christlikeness.

And then, immortality is significant to us because it provides the mightiest possible motive for righteous and godly living. The farmer's incentive for industry is his faith that the future will bring forth a crop; the student's motive for burning the midnight electricity is that the future will unfold opportunities for multiplied usefulness to the people who are prepared; the courage of the mother for sacrifice comes in her hope that the future will see children growing up with characters of which she may be proud if she does her duty now. The overpowering and the inexhaustible inducement to the Christian to surrender the frothy satisfactions of sensational pleasures, to bear patiently the persecutions of enemies, to surrender treasure to holy causes is the conviction that

"Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul."

Why could Christ stand the derisions of those who mocked Him on the cross? Because He was sure of His God and of immortality. Long after His tormentors were forgotten, His soul would be marching through eternity victorious with the triumph of supreme moral and spiritual splendour. The significance of immortality is that the treasures of earth are as tinsel compared with the treasures

of heaven. Paul tells us of the significance of immortality when he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." And again, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

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